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CLIENTS OF PROSTITUTION: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

BY

MILES HOWE

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UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

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## **Clients of Prostitution, a Sociological Analysis.**

The aim of this thesis is to examine the existing data surrounding clients of prostitution. The thesis begins by establishing a theoretical basis that addresses the issues of sexuality and desire. The aim of this theoretical framework is to demonstrate that sexual desire is a social construct that varies over time and culture.

Using this framework, the thesis goes on to explore the existing academic studies that have studied clients of prostitution. The information contained within these studies, for the sake of ease of analysis, was divided into two categories, which form the next two chapters of the thesis. These are; demographic composition, and; motivation for purchase.

Although this thesis could draw no definite conclusions surrounding the propensity of particular demographic groups of men to be more apt to purchase sex, numerous issues were raised that merit further study. These include; the influence of male hegemony upon the propensity to purchase sex; the interconnection of power and control with sexual desire; and the current lack of information surrounding links between particular motivations and particular demographic groups.

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# 1. Introduction

## *1.1 Overview*

On first thought, one might posit that prostitution is, and always has been, a globally omnipresent phenomenon. Common reference to prostitution as the “the world’s oldest profession” reinforces this perception. Rather than appearing as a symptom of a particular society, this popular rhetoric paints prostitution as an unavoidable social constant. Seemingly under this influence, governmental organizations, at varied levels of jurisdiction, adapt policies in order to enforce varying measures of control over this supposedly unstoppable force. These policies differ over time and cultural boundaries. They range from control, such as in England of the mid-nineteenth century (Barry 1979), to legislated legalization, as currently occurs in Holland and Germany (Poulin 2003), to neo-abolition as is the case in Sweden since 1999 (Månsson 2003).

The development of, and debate over, the justness of these policies has spawned a great deal of related research. Prostituted women have historically been the focal point of this research. Classically overlooked is the fact that the act of prostituting oneself requires the interaction of two parties, the prostituted woman who sells, and the client, who purchases. Most common are studies that focus almost exclusively on the prostituted woman. The general presentation of the act of purchasing sex is as a regular social occurrence, or as an excusable symptom of “boys will be boys”. Researchers largely ignore the client, and only the seller of sex is an anomaly worthy of study. According to Roberta Perkins (in Audet 2004: 331), less than 1% of studies related to prostitution deal with clients.

Of the handful of client-related studies, the vast majority focuses on two aspects of the client, that is, his self-professed motivations for the purchase, and his demographic status in relation to non-client men. Of those studies that examine client motivations, most conclude that the client's desires for purchased sex are the same desires that any man might feel or experience, given a particular set of potential circumstances (Bernstein 2001, Campbell 1998, Plummer *et al.* 1997, Jordan 1997, Bailey 2002, Prieur and Taksdal 1993, Kern 2003, Diana 1985).

Of those studies that compare client demographics against non-client demographics, most conclude that no particular demographic group overly represents the client population (Monto *et al.* 2002, Campbell 1998, Holzman and Pines 1982, Diana 1985, Jordan 1997, Plummer *et al.* 1997, Freund *et al.* 1991, Moore 1999, Xantidis *et al.* 2000, Lever and Dolnick 2000). Only a few existing studies present demographic dissimilarities (O'Connell Davidson *et al.* 2003, Månsson 2003, Prieur, A., Taksdal, A. 1993, Marttila 2003, Sullivan & Simon 1998), or critically examine the reasoning clients present for purchasing sex (Månsson 2003, O'Connell Davidson 1998, O'Connell Davidson 2003, Marttila 2003). The presentation of the client as the "common man", however, heavily outweighs these studies.

Herein lies the problematic of this thesis. One cannot excuse the client from the research process simply because he is demographically similar to non-clients, or because his self-professed motivations for purchasing sex appear to be within the realm of possibilities of all men. The conclusion that all men are potential clients because some men purchase sex appears to be based on a biological argument, and yet overlooks the fact that not all men *are* clients. In fact, the existing data demonstrates that the percentage

of clients within the total male population varies significantly between nations. Because of the difficulties in examining this type of populations, this data is not completely above criticism. However, these findings do point to the effect of ideology upon sexual behavior. The estimation of the rates of clients within the total male population are as follows; Finland 13% (Haavio-Mannila & Rotkirch 2000 in Månsson 2003), Norway 11% (Leridon et al. 1998 in Månsson 2003), Sweden 13% (Lewin et al. 1998 in Månsson 2003), Great Britain 7% (Wellings et al. 1993 in Månsson 2003), Netherlands 14% (Leridon et al. 1998 in Månsson 2003), Switzerland 19% (Leridon et al. 1998 in Månsson 2003), Spain 39% (Leridon et al. 1998 in Månsson 2003), Russia 10% (Haavio-Mannila & Rotkirch 2000 in Månsson 2003), United States 16% (Michaels et al. 1994 in Månsson 2003), Thailande, 75 % (Barry, 1995).

It is the aim of this thesis to demonstrate that the proposal that all men are potential clients rests upon several faulty assumptions. In bringing these assumptions into question, the next step of this thesis will be to review the amount of existing data concerning clients, in order that it might be re-interpreted. Finally, this thesis will discuss the character and scope of the prostitution industry, in order to alert the reader to the fact that prostitution is not, in reality, a relationship between two consenting adults. Rather, the plight of prostituted, and trafficked, women is real, and from a human rights standpoint is an issue that begs for immediate action.

## *1.2 Hypothesis*

The notion of the client of prostitution as “Mr. Everybody”, and hence as being excused from study, rests upon two false notions. The first falsehood resides within the

argument that the desire for purchased sex with a prostituted woman is equivalent to the desire for non-purchased sex with a non-prostituted woman. It is the aim of this thesis to demonstrate that the desire for purchased sex from a prostituted woman is linked to the client's desire for a measure of power and control that is otherwise socially unattainable. This is not a similar desire to that for consensual sex with a non-prostituted woman.

The second falsehood resides within the argument that prostitution is an unavoidable and necessary aspect of society. This thesis will present the existence of female prostitution as being symptomatic of a particular type of society, which does not suggest that prostitution is inherent in all societies. This thesis posits that the prostitution of women arises only in societies that are based upon two criteria. The first is an acceptance of social inequalities based on sex, that is, of men over women. The second is that prostitution appears only in societies that have developed market economies. Without these two criteria, which are not historical necessities for male/female relations or for the survival of all societies, prostitution can not exist.

### ***1.3 Procedure***

The first step of this thesis is to present a summary of several key sociological theories concerning "sexual desire" and "sexuality". These theories include Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*, Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, Barry's *Female Sexual Slavery*, and Brownmiller's *Against Our Will*. The aim of this summary is to gain an understanding of precisely *what* is desired, and concomitantly, *what* is being bought by the client.

It does not suffice to say that the client simply desires sex, in terms of an overwhelming urge to ejaculate. The line between the *desire* for sex and the decision to purchase sex is not straightforward. The most straightforward conclusion to such an “overwhelming” urge would be masturbation. And, even if the *desire* for sex is somehow interpreted as a need to ejaculate with another individual (in this case a prostituted woman) present, this desire cannot be considered overwhelming, because not all men chose to purchase sex. In fact the percentage of men who chose to purchase sex is frequently a minority of the total male population. Clearly then, there is a need to clarify what the *desire* for purchased sex entails.

The sexual act, as noted by Foucault, is an arena in which the dichotomy of power and control are intertwined with the desire for *pleasure*. Power and control cannot be shared equally between the partners when a purchase of sex occurs, because the purchase of sex itself is inconceivable without socially endorsed sexual inequality. The desire for pleasure, therefore, is not mutual, but is a desire for *masculine* pleasure. In purchasing sex, the client does not desire mutual pleasure, but is instead only concerned with his own pleasure. And, his pleasure does not arise from the mechanical sexual act itself, but from the amount of power and control that he obtains through the purchase of access to the prostituted woman’s body.

As Poulin (2004: 300) notes,

La « sexualité bourgeoise », qui est patriarcale, déploie « une culture du sperme », ce qui est particulièrement évident dans les industries du sexe où tous les actes sont concentrés sur l’éjaculation masculine, la femme n’étant qu’un réceptacle du plaisir masculin, dont l’un des effets est de garantir l’affirmation masculine. Cette affirmation est à la fois individualiste et marchande. Pour Foucault, la société moderne est « perverse », car elle ne cesse d’enrouler des spirales où pouvoir et plaisir se soutiennent et se fortifient mutuellement. Ce pouvoir et ce plaisir sont avant tout masculins. La sexualité vénale est en quelque sorte l’entrecroisement gordien du pouvoir et du plaisir masculins.

Foucault also notes that the “study” of sexuality is nothing more than the ascription of rules and regulations onto the sexual act, meant to place value and sanctity on a particular relationship of power. These rules and regulations are not ascribed in a haphazard manner. Instead, the term “sexuality” is meant to reinforce a *particular* relationship between the sexes by presenting an unequal division of power and control as natural. The most nefarious manner in which sexuality reinforces this unequal division of power and control is by claiming to have an understanding of both male and female pleasure. Male pleasure is, of course, by nature dominant, while female pleasure is submissive.

Brownmiller and Barry essentially concur, and note that the sexual act is easily imbued with social values. Brownmiller cites prison rape as a glaring example of a situation in which the rapist obtains pleasure from the sexual act by demonstrating his complete power and control over the raped. Interestingly, Brownmiller also argues that rape, especially within a prison setting, is a means of not only establishing dominance over the raped, but is also an effective means for the rapist to gain hegemonic rank within his own sub-group.

While differences exist between the purchase of sex and rape (most notably the concept of “consent”), it is interesting to note that O’Connell Davidson, among others, notes that some men claim to be motivated to purchase sex as a means of gaining social status among their peers. The sexual act, therefore, is not only a relationship of power, control, and desire, between the partners, but is also an act that has the potential to establish hegemony within the outside society. While various social meanings imbue the

decision to purchase sex (be they the desire for pleasure in outright domination of the other, the desire to gain social rank through sex, or other, as yet unexplored motivations), the crucial point to bear in mind is that these meanings are social. The meanings ascribed to sex vary from society to society.

Because men do not *need* purchased sex, one cannot consider that the option to purchase sex is a necessity for the health and survival of a particular society. Rather, the option to purchase sex becomes the consequence of a specific, socially endorsed, perception of sexuality. Just as notions of “sexuality” vary across time and culture, in service of a particular division of power between the sexes, so too does the social accord given to purchased sex. The relative presence or absence of prostitution within a society reveals much about that society’s particular perceptions of sexuality, and existent imbalances of power between the sexes. An examination of the social factors that allow purchased sex to emerge as a viable, and justifiable, act is to conclude the first chapter.

This examination will be based upon Barry’s theoretical discourse concerning sexual fantasies. Barry argues that a sexual fantasy, such as the desire to purchase sex, cannot exist without prior exposure to the idea of this fantasy. Exposure to this fantasy originates in a patriarchal market economy. However, the link must be made between paid sex and unpaid sex, in that paid sex must be presented as a pleasurable experience. As will be more fully examined in the fourth chapter of this thesis, the client must be motivated to purchase sex. This requires the presence of social stimuli that encourage the client to purchase sex, either by telling the client something about himself (you’re a man, you need sex), or about the purchased sex itself (it is “better” than unpaid sex). These

stimuli, which include pornography, have varying degrees of effect upon different sub-groups of men.

The second chapter continues by examining the current status of the global prostitution industry. The aim of this chapter is to place in context the effect of the decision that the client takes when choosing to purchase sex. From a moral or ethical standpoint, the hardships that affect prostituted individuals are dire. The clients decision to purchase sex does not only *temporarily* affect the level of power and control allocated to a prostituted woman.

The extreme lack of power and control held by prostituted women does not commence with the initiation of the paid sexual encounter, and cease with the termination of the sexual encounter. The vast majority of prostituted women are pimped, which, as will be explored, is a state of permanent loss of power and control. Also to be explored is the plight of trafficked women, drug addictions, legal loopholes that hinder prostituted women, and family histories of prostituted women.

All this is to say that the client's decision to purchase sex from a prostituted woman is a morally reprehensible act. Whatever motivation that the client might believe, the reality is that the life of the prostituted woman is so grim that the client should not only be ashamed, but should be punished for playing a role in the unnecessary misery of another human being.

The third chapter continues by examining the existing information surrounding client demographics. The works of Barry and Chaleil, among others, appear to demonstrate that certain sub-groups of men, especially younger men, are more likely to accept, and act out on, the stimuli that promote the purchase of sex as a means of

obtaining pleasure. These sub-groups share the commonality of being, or of perceiving themselves as being, without power and control in comparison to other men. When pleasure is intertwined with power and control, and sex is a means of obtaining pleasure, and when purchased sex is equivalent to *all* sex, men may plausibly purchase sex as a means of obtaining their own measure of pleasure through the acquisition of power and control. The fact that their pleasure, read power, is bought at the expense of another individual, would appear to them to be irrelevant, or at least is less important to them than the power and control that comes with the purchase.

An examination of these findings reveals that there are demographic discrepancies between clients and non-clients. These discrepancies appear between sub-groups on a national level, along the fields of education, occupation, age, and ethnicity, among others. Månsson (2003) and O'Connell Davidson's (2003) works have also shown that discrepancies appear between national boundaries. Using Foucault's notion of power, control, and pleasure, and Barry's argument concerning the origins of sexual fantasies, one can plausibly formulate a three-pronged hypothesis concerning these discrepancies. It is important to note however, that all three prongs of this hypothesis are intertwined and only function in combination.

Firstly, the less power and control, either perceived or real, that a man has, the greater his propensity to purchase sex. Secondly, the greater the degree of acceptance that a man's social sub-group places upon the purchase of sex as an equivalent of, or as an experience that surpasses, non-purchased sex, the higher the rate of probability that that man will accept the option of purchased sex. Thirdly, where men perceive of sex as a means to obtain pleasure, power, and control, there is a higher probability that the man

will chose to purchase sex as a means of acquiring said pleasure, power, and control. Using this hypothesis, one can attempt to explain the discrepancies that exist in client demographics, both between sub-groups on a national level, and between countries on an international scale.

While the third chapter focuses on identifying the client demographically, the fourth chapter focuses on identifying the client ideologically. This is done by analyzing the motivations the client gives for choosing to purchase sex. Interestingly, although one might posit that clients would be prone to give the straightforward answer “I was sexually aroused, and wanted sex”, much of the existing research has found that the client is motivated to purchase sex for the various fantastic scenarios that he ascribes to either the prostituted woman herself, or to the purchased sexual encounter. In short, clients testify that the motivation to purchase sex is most often more complex than a simple desire for the mechanical motion of sexual intercourse.

It is interesting to note that the client perceives the prostituted woman to be the *only* means by which he can fulfill his fantasy. Utilizing Barry’s theoretical argument concerning the social origins of sexual fantasies, one must question the link between stimuli and fantasy. In short, what qualities does the prostituted woman, or purchased sex, have that cannot be obtained elsewhere? And, concomitantly, what is the origin of the ascription of these qualities?

In attempting to find answers to these questions, this thesis will analyze the most popular motivations given by clients for their purchases of sex. This thesis will work from the premise that, as Månsson notes, the presence of these fantasies does not lead directly to sex with a prostituted woman. Potential non-prostituted sexual partners are

available to fulfill all of the client's supposed motivations for purchasing sex. *The only fantasy that non-prostituted women cannot fulfill is the fantasy of having sex with a prostituted woman.*

One can reduce this fantasy to a desire to purchase the sex of a woman, who in being "bought", has her measure of power and control reduced to a level that is otherwise unattainable, at least "legally". The client derives his pleasure from this encounter in the fact that *his* measure of power and control within the sexual encounter is at an otherwise impossibly elevated level. It is the aim of the fifth chapter to examine, motivation by motivation, the reasons that clients give for purchasing sex, and to then reduce these motivations to a desire for the pleasure the client obtains through this level of power and control.

#### ***1.4 Methodology***

This thesis relies solely upon secondary research. After examining several theoretical texts surrounding sexuality, library and Internet searches were performed in order to compile a thorough list of studies related to clients. Bibliographies and citations from located studies were also examined, in order to complete a more exhaustive search. Once these studies were compiled, it became apparent that they could be divided into two general categories, those that dealt with demographics, and those that dealt with motivations. Headings were devised that captured the major demographic categories, as well as the most popular self-professed motivations, in order to complete a full qualitative analysis. Finally, secondary research was conducted in order to obtain a representation of the prostitution industry at it currently exists.

## 2. Theories on Male Sexuality and the Client.

The initial aim of this chapter is to examine the theoretical arguments of Marcuse, Foucault, and Barry, in regards to the concept of “sexuality”. The goal of this examination is to place the client within a theoretical framework that emphasizes the social nature of sexuality. By placing the client within such a discourse, the act of sex, and more so the act of purchasing sex, is imbued with social meanings. As mentioned, these include, but are not limited to; power, control, and pleasure.

The second aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that female prostitution is the consequence of a specific, social, organization of sexuality. Female prostitution has not existed throughout time immemorial, and is instead the consequence of female subordination to males, and the presence of a market economy. One can therefore interpret the purchase of sex as being the product of a particular society of identifiable characteristics, and not an irreducible expression of male sexual desire.

### 2.1 Marcuse: *Repressed Sexuality*.

In *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse argues that while there may be an inherent sexuality whose form is instinctual, this sexual instinct cannot be known because of the repressed structure of society. *Eros and Civilization* is a debate against the Freudian method. Freud claimed that sexual repression was necessary for the advancement of civilization (Marcuse 1972: 29). The energies of the sexual instinct, if left to their natural state, sexualize the entire human body. The body, in turn, would shirk away from pain-causing labour, which would ultimately lead to a massive societal regression. Hence, for

the sake of societal advancement, one had to harness the energies of the sexual instinct and convert them into labour power.

Freud felt that within each person a 'mental apparatus' governed the sexual instinct through two sets of principles: the *pleasure principle* and the *reality principle*. The pleasure principle represented a phase of human development that corresponded to pre-societal desires. These desires were for "whole body" pleasures, and were not limited solely to genital contact. According to Freud, if individuals allowed themselves to be governed solely by the pleasure principle, they would "strive for nothing but for 'gaining pleasure; from any operation which might arouse unpleasantness ("pain") mental activity draws back.'" (Marcuse 1972: 30).

Freud claimed that as individuals came to understand that they could not immediately satisfy their desires, due to the constraints of the natural and human environments, the reality principle took shape. The reality principle subjugated the pleasure principle and, as Marcuse notes, "Man learns to give up momentary, uncertain, and destructive pleasure for delayed, restrained, but 'assured' pleasure (Marcuse 1972: 30)."

For the advancement of civilization, Freud considered necessary the subjugation of the pleasure principle to the reality principle. Its subjugation, however, alters the desire for pleasure and gratification from its instinctual state. As Marcuse states: "The adjustment of pleasure to the reality principle implies...its incompatibility with the established societal norms and relations...(it) implies the transubstantiation of pleasure itself (Marcuse 1972: 30)."

It is possible to consider the purchase of sex as a desire to submit oneself to the pleasure principle, and to seek out pleasure at its most basic, socially destructive level. As will be demonstrated, the purchase of sex is often presented as an expression of “instinctual” desire. However, the pleasure derived from the purchase of sex is problematic because it provides pleasure (whether or not one labels it as “basic” is irrelevant) to only one participant, the client. As for the prostituted woman, it would seem that her pleasure, and indeed her subjugation for the sake of the client’s pleasure, is completely overlooked in this equation. An entire ideology is devoted to actively attempting to convince men in general, and clients in particular, that women are in some way “hard-wired” to derive pleasure from submissive behavior. However, much to the chagrin of clients the world over, the testimony of prostituted women clearly points to the fact that they derive no sense of pleasure from selling access to their bodies (see Perkins & Bennett 1985: 223, Høigård & Finstad 1992: 64).

As well, one cannot consider the purchase of sex to be an expression of some “primal” pleasure, if only because, as will be demonstrated, fully functional societies have existed that have not had female prostitution. If purchased sex were an instinctual expression of pleasure, even if this expression of desire were limited to the male of the species, then one would find purchased sex throughout all societies in history, which one does not. Therefore, one must consider the purchase of sex to be an expression of social pleasure, in that it is the result of a particular set of social circumstances (a reality principle). One cannot view the purchase of sex as a recollection of an instinctual pleasure, because it arises only under certain social conditions.

One must consider the reality principle as a social construct because its very purpose is to subjugate the pleasure principle to the processes of civilization that allow non-primitive societies to function. Just as various societies rely on various societal norms and regulations for their survival, so must the “reality principle”, if that is the name to be given to social rules and regulations, vary from society to society. This would suggest that social pleasures are social construct, as are the means of obtaining said pleasure. Just as in one society, the consumption of a particular food is considered pleasurable, while in the next the same food is deplored, so too in one society is the purchase of sex considered pleasurable, while in the next it is a social taboo.

One must consider then, that representations of sexual actions that lead to socially endorsed pleasure are nothing more than social constructs that serve to repress the pleasure principle, whatever this might be, in a socially functional manner. One might be better off considering that the pleasure principle does not exist, and that representations of sexual acts that lead to socially endorsed pleasure are repressive upon the individual, for no other reason than to have him/her serve a particular social ideology.

Using such a rubric, the purchase of sex itself, inasmuch as it is if not socially endorsed, then at least socially permitted, serves to repress the individual in the service of a particular social ideology. The client, for his part, is meant to perceive of himself as an instinctual animal whose basic pleasures come from seeking out sex with numerous, anonymous, strangers. The prostituted woman, for her part, is triply repressed. Firstly by her pimp, who reduces her to so much commodity, secondly by the society that allows her to be prostituted, and then frequently punishes her for this “crime”, and thirdly by the client’s socially-sanctioned desire for pleasure. Such an ideology clearly submits women

to male domination. However, it must not be overlooked that this same ideology commodifies sex in such a manner that not all men might comprehend that the sexual act has the potential to be something *other than* a commodity.

Regarding sexual activity, Freud classified all sexual acts and pleasures not associated with sexual reproduction as perversions. Freud considered those pleasures that sexualized the body as *taboos*, because they had the potential to present bodily pleasure as being complete in and of themselves, without the occurrence of penetration. The portrayal of genital penetration as the ultimate pleasure and end-result of every bodily encounter was the basis of the entire structure of Freud's necessarily repressed society (Marcuse 1972: 44).

Again, one must return to the point that the purchase of sex is little more than a social construction. If, as Freud argues, the pleasure principle is meant to sexualize the entire body (albeit to the destruction of all non-primitive societies), then genital contact is not the be all and end all of the instinctual, sexual encounter. During the purchase of sex, however, it almost invariably is, with an added emphasis on male ejaculation. The emphasis upon genital contact, and male ejaculation in particular, is much more indicative of a particular social pleasure, or of a pleasure that serves the reality principle, rather than the pleasure principle. Simply put, if one agrees with Freud's definition of both the pleasure and reality principles, then the emphasis on genital sex and ejaculation that fuels the prostitution industry is a socially created emphasis.

Marcuse argues that desexualizing the body is not a necessary repression of the pleasure principle. Instead, the focus on genital contact was due to the dominant set of norms and regulations (reality principle) of the particular society in which Freud lived.

Freud's society was governed by the "*performance principle*". According to Marcuse (1972: 47), the performance principle "is that of an acquisitive and antagonistic society in the process of constant expansion, (and) presupposes a long development during which domination has been increasingly rationalized."

Marcuse (1972: 42) claimed that the societal rules and norms endorsed by the performance principle are not indicative of necessary repression of the pleasure principle, but are in fact *surplus-repression*. Society under the performance principle has led to a surplus of necessities. The possibility to distribute this surplus equally, and hence relieve labor-induced sexual repression, is real. Therefore, the norms and rules that govern sexual repression under the performance principle are excessive, and the product of unequal distribution (Marcuse 1972: 42-43).

Modern society mirrors Freud's society in two relevant ways. First, both societies had prostitution (see Flexner 1914, Fisher 1997). Secondly, both societies could be said to be governed by a similar performance principle. If anything, the performance principle that encapsulates the dominant rules and regulations of modern society has led to an even greater surplus of necessities. Knowing that prostitution is not a symptom of *all* societies, but is the product of a particular set of repressive norms and regulations, and knowing that the scale of the prostitution industry has been growing rampantly since Victorian times, and in particular during the last thirty-odd years (see Chaleil 2002: 43), one might posit that the phenomenon of prostitution is linked to Marcuse's "acquisitive and antagonistic society in the process of constant expansion, (which) presupposes a long development during which domination has been increasingly rationalized."

Unleashed upon such an acquisitive and antagonistic society, Freud's pleasure principle would not coincide with socially accepted means of sexual repression (marriage, heterosexuality, *prostitution*). These socially accepted means of sexual repression, however, are only vital to the existence of a society based upon the performance principle. They are not vital to the existence of *all* types of societies. Freud errs by assuming that an acquisitive and antagonistic society is the archetype of all post-primitive civilizations.

## ***2.2 Foucault. Sexuality as Transfer Point for Pleasure & Power.***

Marcuse argues that the sexual instinct is potentially real, but it is currently not possible to express it because of the existence of unnecessary social repression. On the other hand, Foucault, in *The History of Sexuality*, presents the argument that the notion of sexuality (which encapsulates the sexual instinct) is a historical construct that merely pretends to *know* sex. Foucault warns that the concept of sexuality, and the "knowledge" contained therein, is not objective, but serves to endorse power inequalities within a particular social ideology.

Foucault notes that within every society, sex contains the potential for "alliances" to occur. Alliances incur "systems of marriage...fixation and development of kinship ties...transmission of names and possessions (Foucault 1990: 107)." This would suggest that all societies recognize sex as an area where power has the potential to be localized, controlled, and exchanged.

Building alliances upon sexual relations suggests that there is the need to control sex. Alliance in Victorian society was based upon the production of children, from a known

father, who stood to gain from inheritance. Hence, heterosexual relations where the woman was bound to monogamy were encouraged.

Foucault notes that laws and regulations were the first attempt made by Victorian society to control sex. These laws placed sexual relations into a legal, binary system. Heterosexual relations, with an emphasis on female monogamy, were licit, or permitted. All other manner of sexual relations that might weaken the control of this particular type of alliance were illicit and forbidden (Foucault 1990: 83).

Foucault notes, however, that during the past few centuries the “historical gradient” of society has shifted, so that the rule of law has become an increasingly inadequate representative of power. Alone, the power of law has become incapable of maintaining a link between sex and alliance. The downfall of law, however, does not annul the potential power contained within the system of alliance. Nor has the balance of power between men and women drastically shifted since Victorian times. Rather, only the means of enforcing the inequalities in power and control have changed. Foucault (1990: 89) describes these forms of validation:

[Their] operation is not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus.

The continued need to validate alliance, in light of the failure of law, gave rise to the notion of sexuality. Therefore, the birth of the concept of sexuality (around the late 17<sup>th</sup> century) is not an attempt to objectively further humanity’s knowledge surrounding sex. Instead, the concept of sexuality is simply a new means of controlling sexual relations.

Sexuality ascribes basic characteristics to the male and female sexuality. Only by acting within the confines of these characteristics, only by expressing oneself “naturally”, can one obtain sexual “pleasure”. Not coincidentally, “natural” male and female

sexuality, and the acquisition of pleasure, is tied into acting out only the types of sexual acts that reinforce the dominant social systems of power and control. As Foucault (1990: 105-106) notes:

Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledge, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power.

Foucault notes that sexuality is a more pervasive method of control over sex than law ever was. While law prescribed what is acceptable in terms of the relations that the body enters into, sexuality claims to understand the reason behind sexual desires and “perversions”. Sexuality claims to have knowledge surrounding the pleasure that one derives from sex, most notably *the* means to attain said pleasure. The means to attain sexual pleasure, the way one must act, the things one must desire, the method that one must have sex, all serve to endorse the imbalances of power between the sexes. As Foucault (1990: 107) writes:

The deployment of sexuality has its reason for being, not in reproducing itself, but in proliferating, innovating, annexing, creating, and penetrating bodies in an increasingly detailed way, and in controlling populations in an increasingly comprehensive way.

The client, then, who purchases sex because he believes himself to be a “natural” man, driven by the same sexuality that drives all men to seek out brief, random, sexual encounters, is not acting in an instinctual manner. Nor, on the other hand, may be the man who marries his high school sweetheart and remains sexually monogamous for the span of his life. As for the client, whether he believes that purchased sex is simply the *easiest*

way to obtain sex, or whether he finds that the *only* means for him to obtain multiple partners is to purchase sex, is irrelevant. In both cases he justifies his actions by falling back on his sexuality, which, as Foucault demonstrates, is nothing more than propaganda in service of the dominant ideology.

### ***2.3 Sexuality as a Social Construct.***

Kathleen Barry does not perceive sexuality to be an historical construct, and instead perceives it as a component of the self. However, sexuality is only “activated” in the social. Outside of the social, there can be no sexuality. As Barry (1995: 26) writes:

Sex, an embodied dimension of the self, is *not* a preexisting physical or physiological fact, not an already-shaped fact of human experience that merely realizes itself when it is stimulated. “Drives” or impulses that are engaged in initiating sexual desire dictate neither the nature nor the quality of the sexual experience.

According to Barry, sexual fantasies are central to the formation process of sexuality. Individual exposure to the idea of a sexual fantasy, whose origins are social, is the *only* means by which the idea of that particular fantasy can possibly enter an individual’s frame of reference. Barry does not make clear whether there is a pre-existing, basic, sexual desire that exists on an instinctual level. She appears instead to support the notion of *tabula rasa*, in that sexual desire is completely learned. Sexual fantasies entail whatever motivation the client has for deciding to purchase sex.

Because of its social origin, the existence of a particular sexual fantasy is not haphazard. The purpose of a sexual fantasy is to promote a particular social agenda by presenting a certain type of relation as being sexually pleasurable. Borrowing from Foucault, the particular sexual relation presented as pleasurable contains within it a

specific distribution of power between the sexes. Sexual fantasies contain within them ideas of pleasure that are linked to power and control. As Barry (1979: 212) writes:

It is impossible to think of any symbol, image, or concept in fantasy if we have no prior knowledge of its existence. It is in our interaction in the social world that concepts or images are formed or developed. We must know about something from our social experience for it to enter our fantasy life.

Sexual fantasies then, that are promoted by the dominant ideology, must then necessarily support those divisions of power between the sexes that serve the dominant ideology. In the case of the fantasy of purchased sex, a relationship in which a prostituted woman is commodified, and a client gains an otherwise unattainable measure of control and power, is presented as pleasurable. Prostitution exists globally on a multi-billion dollar scale, and governments are most often knowingly complicit to such a relationship. This suggests that the commodification of women, and an imbalance of power between men and women are part and parcel of a dominant global ideology.

#### ***2.4 Prostitution: An Expression of Sexuality.***

Prostitution has not always existed. This is important to note, because the commodification of women, and their subjugation to men, while necessary steps for prostitution to occur, are not necessary for the survival of post-primitive societies. In her 1975 book *Against Our Will*, Susan Brownmiller undertook an historical examination of rape with the goal of discovering societies in which rape did not occur. Brownmiller's theory was that rape was not a natural expression of male sexual desire, but was in fact a social construct. Because of the theoretical similarities between Brownmiller's study on rape and this current study on the purchase of sex, Brownmiller's findings regarding rape will be extrapolated.

Borrowing from Brownmiller's findings concerning rape is by no means an attempt to ignore the differences between the acts of rape and purchasing sex. The act of rape does not require the consent of the victim, while the prostituted woman has, in some capacity, the ability to accept or refuse a client. However, rape and the purchase of sex are similar because they represent two instances in which the levels of power and control are greatly unbalanced towards the man. Brownmiller's work, in light of the fact that academic theories surrounding clients of prostituted women remains limited, however, is vital.

To confirm her hypothesis of rape-as-social, Brownmiller required the existence of at least one society in which rape was entirely absent. She identified the Iroquois aboriginal people of North America as a society in which rape categorically did not occur. Brownmiller (1975: 141) found that during the colonial period in North America, the Iroquois did not rape their female prisoners, a practice that conversely appeared to be prevalent among their European counterparts.

In attempting to explain the absence of rape, Foucault might argue that in a matrilineal society the concept of rape would not coincide with the prevalent balance of power between the sexes. Barry might argue that without a link between violence towards women and sexual fantasy, the Iroquois would not consider acts of sexual aggression towards women by men as an act that might provide male sexual pleasure. In any case, Brownmiller had categorical evidence to demonstrate that rape was not a universal expression of male sexuality.

Along a similar vein of research, Malinowski's work among the Trobrian Islanders of the South Pacific points to the socially-dependant link between sexual

pleasure and male sexual aggression. In his analysis of Malinowski's book *La vie sexuelle des sauvages*, in which he documents the sexual practices of the Trobrian Islanders, Wilhelm Reich (in Chaleil 2002: 235) wrote:

La société des Iles Trobriens ne connaissait en 1930 ni perversion sexuelle, ni psychoses fonctionnelles, ni psycho-névroses, ni meurtres sexuels. Le mot viol n'a pas d'équivalent dans leur langue.

As with the Iroquois, the absence of rape among the Trobrian Islanders points to the successful existence of societies in which society does not dictate that male sexual pleasure is linked to expressions of power and aggression over the female. The importance of this finding is twofold. Firstly, it demonstrates that there is no "natural" or "instinctual" link between male sexual pleasure and sexual aggression. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, it demonstrates that societies manage to successfully survive when male sexual pleasure is not expressed through aggressiveness or domination over women. These findings merely serve to reiterate the fact that the supposed sexual pleasure gained from purchasing sex is social, not "natural".

Finally, consider Brownmiller's research on rape in all-male prisons. Within prisons, Brownmiller found that rape between in-mates occurs frequently. Brownmiller argues that the singular motivation for prison rape is to establish a level of hierarchy. From the standpoint of "sexuality", it would be impossible to argue that both men engage in rape for pleasure, because as two men, they both share the same sexual characteristics. The raped man could not derive any pleasure from the episode, because as a man, he would be sexually hard-wired for aggressiveness. Therefore, one is left with the possibility that the rapist derives singular pleasure from the episode. But, as Alan J. Davis (in Brownmiller 1975: 266) writes:

Homosexual rape in prison could not be primarily motivated by the need for sexual release, since auto-erotic masturbation to orgasm is "much easier and more normal." But conquest and degradation did appear to be a primary goal.

The other possibility is that the rape occurs only as a demonstration of aggression.

The rape of another individual is the demonstration of one's power over, and disregard for, the other. Within the crucible of a male prison, where a hierarchy of raw violence is established, the rape of another is linked to establishing one's rank. There is also no reason to believe that the motivation behind prison rape is any different than that of regular rape. As Brownmiller (1975: 267) writes:

Rape in the prison experience...is the need of some men to prove their mastery through physical and sexual assault, and to establish, most strikingly within the special crucible of the male-violent, a coercive hierarchy of the strong on top of the weak.

### *2.5 Hegemonic Masculinity*

It is of interest to note that prisoners often confirm that within the prison system they felt it was necessary to 'rape or be raped'. Knowing that the rapist has a higher social standing than the raped, this would suggest that the rapist carries out rape because he is afraid of having his own social position usurped. The man who does not rape in prison risks being raped, and becoming perceived as 'gay' or effeminate, two labels that are associated with lower social status (Brownmiller 1975: 261).

Rape as a means of acquiring status is not entirely dissimilar from the 'hegemonic masculinity' that motivates some clients to purchase sex. Outside of the prison system, 'hegemonic masculinity' remains a social reality (Carrigan et al. 1985 in Prieur & Taksdal 1993: 112). Prieur and Taksdal note that one method of gaining status within a male hierarchy is through sexual success with women. Sexual success with women can include acting in an aggressive manner towards them, but also can refer to the quantity of

women with whom one has sex. The social implications are clear. In adopting a nonchalant attitude towards one's sexual partners, and indeed in acting in an aggressive manner towards them, men might more easily justify socially devaluing women in non-sexual relations.

As noted by Prieur and Taksdal (1993), men who are not sexually successful with multitudes of women are often considered to be inferior to those who are. For those sexually unsuccessful men who most heavily attribute their own hegemonic rank to the amount of women they have sex with, purchased sex may appear as a means to "climb the social ladder." While not all men are sexually successful with non-prostituted women, all men have the potential to be sexually successful with prostituted women. Thus, there is a potential relation between the purchase of sex and the desire to acquire status *in the eyes of other men*. It would appear debatable, under these circumstances, whether or not pleasure even occurs on an individual level. Even if sexual pleasure were to occur, one must question whether the desire for pleasure is the driving force behind the purchase, or whether the desire for status takes precedence. As Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) notes, in her study of clients on the Internet:

According to Michael Kimmel, masculinity is a homosocial enactment. "We test ourselves, perform heroic feats, take enormous risks, all because we want other men to grant us our manhood." The central organizing principle of this western definition of manhood is homophobia...however; homophobia is, in Kimmel's mind, first of all the fear of being emasculated by other men (Kimmel 1994, 129). The performing and underlining of heterosexuality is indeed a major element within clients of prostitution.

Roger Kearn (2003) and Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) have both noted that a considerable percentage of the content of client-oriented web sites is devoted to messages posted by clients that boast of their sexual encounters. The presence of these client-oriented web sites might be indicative of a need for clients to create a 'virtual'

environment, in which there is appreciation for the act of purchasing sex. Marttila further postulates that postings by men who brag of their purchased sexual encounters indicate an attempt on their part to promote their own masculinity, and thusly acquire acceptance and status from the homosocial group (Marttila 2003).

One should also consider that O'Connell Davidson noted that 65% of her client sample had had their first experience of purchased sex arranged by friends or colleagues.

As O'Connell Davidson (2003: 12) notes:

The data suggests the initial decision to buy sex frequently reflects a desire to conform to peer expectations, thus it is often a public and social, rather than private and personal, matter...Interview data from India and Thailand suggest that boys and young men's initial experiences of prostitution are prompted by some combination of their own perception of the social demands of masculinity and peer pressure to conform to those demands. It shows that prostitute-use can represent a way to publicly demonstrate membership of a particular male subgroup, and/or to claim a particular social identity (as 'adult', 'man', or 'not-gay').

### ***2.6 Status Through Consumption?***

Researchers have also raised questions regarding the means by which purchased sex is equated with social status. Does one's status as a "man" increase because of the fact that one demonstrates the ability to debase women in an endless procession of sexual encounters? Or, does one's status depend upon the very act of consumption, as though the purchase of sex was no different than purchasing a more expensive car than one's neighbors?

Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) argues that within consumer culture, identities, and most notably masculine identities, are formed based on one's ability to consume. While hegemony within the all-male prison may be based upon the brute strength necessary to impose one's self upon another, within the consumer culture hegemony is established by

one's conspicuous consumption. Marttila notes that the common vernacular of client-oriented web sites reduces women, and especially prostituted women, to the status of commodities to be consumed. Prostituted women are "ranked" based on their physical attributes, and are "broken-down" into categories (legs, breasts, ass, hair, sexual performance) that are reminiscent of car magazine reviews (horsepower, maximum speed, engine).

The act of consumption itself also must not be confused with a means of individual expression, or "I buy, therefore I am." One consumes in order to form one's identity in relation to the collective. As Marttila (2003: 9) notes:

According to Mike Featherstone, consumerism is a symbolic area, on which individuals form collective identities. Accepting that there is no 'essential' identity to be discovered, the postmodern 'subject' constructs "whatever meaning they can from whatever bag of resources they have available to them"...We consume for a variety of reasons, including social status, which have "a non-quantifiable, 'symbolic' value"...To go further, Michel Maffesoli suggests that consumerism – "hedonism and aestheticism" – is not in fact, a "praise" of individualism but a manifestation of "pluralism, fracture and relativism" that "merge into a heterogeneity"... "The body is constructed, cultivated and embellished under the eyes of others and for others to see. Thus even that which might appear as a sign of perfected individualism is in fact part of our tribal, collective hedonism."

Finally, consider the findings of O'Connell Davidson (2003: 22). In her interviews with Thai clients, O'Connell Davidson found that one's social status was determined by what type of prostituted woman one purchased. If one spent more on the purchase of sex, one was held in higher esteem by one's peers. The following testimony from one of O'Connell Davidson's client sample illustrates this finding:

I prefer Thai sex workers because I feel more comfortable with them, and I don't feel proud of myself if I go with migrant sex workers. Socially it is looked down on to be with Burmese sex workers because they work in particular types of establishments which are lower, and friends look down on it. In this male society, the place you visit makes you look good or not. In places where migrants work, the conditions are poor. If you can go to a massage parlour, it makes you look good. Having a university student is good too. Thai women work in different

establishments, such as karaoke, and are more expensive. Poorer men have to go to migrant workers because they are cheaper (Thai government officer, Public relations, single, aged 27).

Consider the different price ranges of prostituted women available. For a certain amount of money, one can purchase the body of a prostituted woman on the street corner. For a much greater amount of money, one can purchase the body of a high-priced call girl. One must opine that the motivation to purchase sex at a much higher price than it is potentially available at is linked to the fact that there is “prestige” associated in purchasing sex from a call girl, rather than from a prostituted woman on the street. In purchasing sex, the more one demonstrates one can pay, the greater one’s hegemonic masculine status.

It is important to note that the difference between purchasing sex in order to gain status by ascribing to a particular attitude vis-à-vis women, and purchasing sex in order to gain status through consumption, is but a minor one. In both instances, the man’s social role is that of dominant actor. In the one case, he acts out upon his aggression and desire for sex, in the other case, he “shops”, “chooses”, and makes a purchase. The woman, for her part, plays the part of submissive, or of commodified object. This is important to note because it demonstrates that the characteristics that establish masculine hegemony are based upon the same characteristics that define Marcuse’s “performance principle”, and Foucault’s “sexuality”. One establishes one’s male hegemony by acquiring the greatest amount of socially-defined pleasure as possible. As argued by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (1998):

Prostitution is possible because men’s power as a dominating class over women exists. The existence of some men in prostitution is in fact most often in service of other men and even when it is women who are the clients, the commercial exchange still mirrors class, race, age or other power differentials between the

buyer and the bought. Most importantly, the prostitution of individual men never diminishes the power of men as a class while the prostitution of women is a direct result of and serves to maintain the subordinate status of women...A culture of sexual consumerism has been stoked by patriarchal capitalism and...not only is sex used to sell products of all kinds, sex itself has been reduced to an aggressively marketed product. This is a relentlessly gendered capitalist enterprise that offers the bodies of women, girls, and also boys, for consumption.

### ***2.7 No Sexual Fantasies Without Social Exposure. Pornography as an "Ideal-Type"***

As demonstrated, a social ideology must integrate two interconnected facets in order for the fantasy of prostitution to take place. The first is an acceptance of male domination and aggression over women. The second is an acceptance of the female sex as a commodity. This is the ideology of a patriarchal, market-based economy.

As Barry argues, a fantasy cannot occur without prior social exposure to the idea of the fantasy. Therefore, stimuli exist within patriarchal, market-based societies that provide men with the idea that women *are* inferior, and that women *are* objects. Without these stimuli, the purchase of sex would be inconceivable, just as it was within Iroquois society. As Brownmiller (1975: 391) argues:

We must look towards those elements in our culture that promote and propagandize these attitudes, which offer men, and in particular, impressionable, adolescent males, the ideology and psychological encouragement to commit their acts of aggression without awareness, for the most part, that they have committed a moral wrong.

Pornography exists as such a stimuli. This is not to imply a causal link between pornography and prostitution. Prostitution exists, and has existed, in patriarchal market-based societies that have been devoid of pornography. Some men use pornography, and never purchase sex. Other clients purchase sex, and never use pornography. The intent of this section is to present pornography as a phenomenon that perfectly encapsulates an

ideology that supports male domination and the normalization of the purchase of female sex. By no means is pornography the singular promoter of the ideology of male domination and the normalization of the female sex as a commodity. Pornography does appear, however, as among its most 'undiluted' proponents. Whether there is a link between the rapid expansion of the global prostitution industry over the course of the last thirty years, and the parallel explosion of the pornographic industry, is left to the reader to discern.

Barry suggests that pornography is a particularly powerful promoter of prostitution, because of the fact that it presents male aggression, and female submission to this aggression, as pleasurable for both sexes. It also presents women as deriving pleasure from their status as commodities, willing and eager to exchange access to their bodies for money. As Barry (1979: 257) writes:

While boys are experiencing and experimenting with their sexuality, the culture provides them with substantive images of idealized sexual encounters; they often learn that they must live up to pornographic models of sex. As boys, growing into men, experiment with their sexuality free from both restraint and responsibility, that mode of behavior becomes, unchanged, the basis of adult male sexual power.

Weltzer-Lang (2002) argues that the pornographic industry does not present *all* women as sexual commodities. One's wife or long-term sexual partner is not easily rendered into a commodity; presumably because of the emotional attachment that one forms with her. The pornographic industry overcomes this hurdle by portraying the wife or girlfriend not as a commodity, but as a 'boring' individual, incapable of providing 'true' sexual satisfaction because of the fact that they are not commodities, and because of the fact that they are only *one* woman. In short, male sexual pleasure is linked to sexual encounters with numerous anonymous women, which, by default, one woman simply cannot provide.

When compared to the seemingly unlimited number of sexually available women promoted through pornography, and available through prostitution, the *one* partner is meant to lose her appeal. This vision also serves to provide an archetype of the female whom men are meant to desire. In general, the woman in the pornographic image is not a representation of all women. Her airbrushed qualities, digitally enhanced breasts, and never-ending sexual stimulation, is not generally reflective of one's wife or girlfriend. The archetypal pornographic woman is attractive, and is sexually receptive immediately upon receipt of money or goods. As Weltzer-Lang (2002) writes:

Les garçons sont socialisés avec l'idée que leur compagne ou leur femme ne va pas satisfaire leurs besoins sexuels et que l'érotisme se passe ailleurs que dans la vie quotidienne. Ils savent qu'il va leur falloir payer d'une manière ou d'une autre. Ils sont clients avant même d'être pubères.

Weltzer-Lang (2001) also notes that there is no division of men into separate categories of usefulness for women, as women are divided for men. This one-sided separation serves to endorse sexual pleasure stemming from promiscuity among men, and monogamy among women. The argument runs that a man wants to inseminate an endless number of women, while each woman requires a single man to assist her in child-rearing, and thus is biologically programmed for monogamy. Hence, one man has all the characteristics necessary to sexually please any woman, ensuring his exclusive sexual access to her. One woman, on the other hand, does not possess all the characteristics necessary to please any man. This ideology serves to ensure that men have sexual access to a multitude of women, while women remain monogamous. As Weltzer-Lang writes:

Les définitions différentes de l'amour encadrent le secret des hommes: tout-en-un pour les femmes [le même homme — tel un prince charmant — doit être un bon père, un bon mari et un bon amant] et division des femmes en plusieurs types pour les hommes [la compagne légitime affectée au domestique, et les salopes]

(que l'on ne paie pas) ou les putains (que l'on doit payer) affectées à la sexualité].

Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 111) suggest that the sexual fantasy presented in pornography produces sexual anomie, the resolution of which is achieved through prostitution. The impression created by pornography is that there are “great possibilities for sexual adventure”. However, the sexual lives of most men do not conform to the sexual adventure presented to them as their ‘natural state’ through pornography. Prieur and Taksdal suggest that some men, in an attempt to obtain the sexual lifestyle idealized within pornography, that is, of multiple, attractive, sexually receptive, women, will resort to purchasing sex. As Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 111) write:

The opportunities have increased, but not to extent that one is led to believe...However, when there is apparently much more to win, the feeling of loss increases...Man risks being caught up in mass-produced illusions regarding what he can attain in relation to women...Expectations become unrealistic, regardless of personal qualities...Within prostitution, the demands can be boundless – and yet fulfilled – as long as the customer is willing to pay.

Marttila (2003) concurs, noting that the pornographic industry, in combination with other social factors, normalizes the association between female sex and commodity. Marttila notes that the association between female sex and commodity has become increasingly socially pervasive. The link between female sex and commodity, and between male and purchaser, is now so common as to have conferred client behavior with a degree of ‘normalcy’ to which it could never have previously aspired. As Marttila (2003) argues:

A hedonistic demand and a large and varying supply have met in a way that seem to have developed a new kind of consuming culture and consuming habits in the sex trade. Commercial sex appears as consumption and buying sex as not *resorting* to commercial sex but as a conscious, *consumer choice*...The buyers of sex are no longer considered as “losers” or “men who can’t have sex otherwise” – as they traditionally have been stereotyped in Finnish society...This may have changed the masculine concept of honor, making the buyer of sex a *demanding customer*.

While the purchase of sex within Marttila's Finland may only be *becoming* a consumer choice, Barry (1995: 160-161) notes that in other parts of the world the social tissue has been "prostitutionalized". Barry notes that in the mid-nineteen nineties 5.4 million sexual tourists visited Thailand per year. Not only this, but *75% of local Thai men had purchased sex with a prostituted woman*. This is a clear indicator that sexual purchases are becoming more and more commonplace, and with this normalization, so too is the status of women becoming more and more subjugated and commodified.

Barry (1979: 213-214) notes that pornography also presents a particular way of having sex as optimum, or *most* pleasurable to both men, and secondarily, to women. The way of having sex that is promoted within pornography is as important as the recommended endless supply of commodified sex. As Barry (1979: 213-214) argues:

When the images of sexual fantasy that enter interaction are pornographic, the form of fantasy, the objectification of the other it involves, combines with the content of pornography and the experience becomes a product of cultural sadism.

Barry (1979: 209) outlines three 'reality distortions' common to pornographic images:

First, sexual sadism is presented as a source of sexual pleasure for women. The male fantasy insists that beatings, rape, humiliation, and pain turn women on...Second, sadism is portrayed as the other half of the sadomasochistic duality in human nature. Pornography assumes that both parties of the supposed duality enter the act with free will and that the one beaten holds equal power with the one doing the beating. Sadomasochism is a disguise for the act of sexually forcing a woman against her will...Third, sadism involves beatings that result in cuts, lashes, tears...yet...pornography is careful not to show any marks, blood or bruises on a woman's body.

The fantasy contained within the pornographic image is potentially problematic because it links violence with sexual pleasure. The negative impacts of this violence, such as resistance or after-effects, are non-existent, or even rendered erotic. Male and

female participants portray the duality of domination/submission as agreeable and natural. J. F. Laurent (in Chaleil 2002: 84) argues that the pornographic image links sexual success with misogyny. The vast quantity of women, which, according to the pornographic industry, all men are 'hard-wired' to desire, can only be acquired if one treats women in a misogynist manner, because that is how women desire to be treated. As Laurent writes:

[La pornographie est] une idéologie masculine qui n'est pas une simple représentation collective mais une propagande de la misogynie. Elle considère la femme comme un objet sexuel en cherchant à nous convaincre que toute femme est conforme à celle que la pornographie décrit: admirative des capacités sexuelles de l'homme et aimant être battue, ligotée, baillonnée et violée. C'est une célébration, "une liturgie" du triomphe masculin.

Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 112) concur. They acknowledge that some men might purchase sex because their *one* sexual partner is, by default, not adequate to satisfy the pornographic fantasy of multitudes of sexual partners. However, they add that other men might experience a drive to purchase sex because their wives or girlfriends do not act, or will not allow themselves to act, in the same manner as presented within the pornographic fantasy. The wife or girlfriend's decision to refuse the man his pornographic fantasy will not cause the fantasy to dissipate, and the man becomes a potential client. The prostituted woman will always fulfill the pornographic fantasy, because she represents the epitome of female submission and commodification.

Poulin (2004: 219) concurs, and notes that pornography is not simply an explicit and "hyper-realist" representation of the sexual act, but is in fact imbued with a discourse that serves to normalize imbalances of power between men and women. Pornography "prostitutionalizes" sexual fantasies, in that one's sexual fantasies begin to mimic the violence towards, and commodification of, the female sex. As Poulin notes:

Esthétisation de la violence sexuelle, la pornographie n'est pas qu'une représentation explicite et hyperréaliste de l'acte sexuel, elle porte aussi un discours normatif sur la sexualité et sur le corps. Dans ce discours sont mis en œuvre des rapports de pouvoir qui transforment l'humain en choses à maîtriser ; on assiste en quelque sorte à une mise à mort d'autrui, ravalé à un moyen, où les femmes servent d'instruments de jouissance. Sa violence pénètre jusqu'à l'intérieur du sexe féminin. Elle déshumanise et marchandise. C'est le sexe mercantilisé et moyenné, une sorte de « prostitutionnalisation » des fantasmes, son spectacle en quelque sorte.

To summarize, the purchase of sex does appear to have various values associated with it. It would appear as though the social ideology that allows for prostitution to exist is rooted in misogyny and the commodification of women. These are not necessary characteristics of *all* social ideologies, nor is there any link between the roots of prostitution and "male sexuality". One cannot reduce the client of prostitution to an individual motivated by his own "sexuality". The very nature of his purchase is an endorsement of misogyny and the commodification of women.

### **3. Expansion of the Prostitution Industry & the Need for Action.**

#### ***3.1 The Legend of the Independent Prostitute***

To this point, this thesis has demonstrated that female prostitution is indicative of a socially endorsed inequality between the sexes. If one accepts as true that prostituted women knowingly chose to sell their sex, of their own free will, when other plausible options are open to them, the entire discussion surrounding the dimensions of power within prostitution become largely irrelevant.

There would also be no need to discuss the role of the client within this relationship. If the prostituted woman has a variety of viable career options, she is free to sell her sex if this is her choice, regardless of the inequalities inherent within the prostitute/client relationship. However, factual evidence speaks contrary to the notion of “free choice” among prostituted women. As Kathleen Barry (1979: 135) notes:

Romanticization of prostitution, coloring the setting and the services with glamour, fun, and excitement, legitimizes it to the public as a social institution and deflects attention from the violence that surrounds it, the enslavement of women in it[...] It is the life of the “happy hooker” – wherein one “makes love” instead of “turning tricks” and a client is a “lover” not a “john”. It is paid sex where the customer states his needs and both parties swoon their way to fantastic orgasms. Big money and constant sexual satisfaction are disrupted only by an occasional annoying raid from the police.

Simply put, the image of the “happy hooker” is nothing but a flight of the imagination. One need only reconsider the discussions concerning client/prostitute relations, and sexuality, within the previous two chapters. Sexual relations are an area where fantasies that have absolute relevance to the larger social picture are carried out. The prostitute/client relationship is, as has been demonstrated, a relationship in which

power inequalities exist between men and women. The prostitute/client relationship, and the power inequalities therewith, do not exist in a void, free from social influence. The prostitute/client relationship exists *because* society endorses this inequality. The unequal division of power between men and women transpires within purchased sex because the unequal division of power between men and women exists within the social realm. In short, if it were not for social inequalities between the sexes, men would not equate their sexual pleasure to power and control over women, or the purchase of sex as a means of gaining rank within a male hegemony.

Further, if sexual pleasure and rank were no longer based upon the purchase of sex, and if power was distributed equally between the sexes, women would not *need* to be prostituted, nor would there be any demand for such a service. This does not apply only to “third world” countries where inequalities between the sexes *appears* to be most obvious. This applies to all countries in which prostitution exists. The fact that prostitution exists *in any nation*, is indicative of unequal power distributions between the sexes within these nations. As Francis Miko (2003: 4) notes:

[There is] continuing subordination of women in many societies, as reflected in economic, educational, and work opportunity disparities between men and women. Many societies still favor sons and view girls as an economic burden. Desperate families in some of the most impoverished countries sell their daughters to brothels or traffickers for the immediate payoff and to avoid having to pay the dowry to marry off daughters.

### ***3.2 The Legend of Free Choice***

Globally, the net worth of the prostitution industry is an estimated 60 billion euros (Dusch in Poulin 2003: 736). This is not a fragmented industry, and there is very little room for the entrepreneurial spirit. The worldwide prostitution industry is well organized, and controlled by organized crime. Globally, an estimated 85 to 90% of prostituted

women controlled by pimps (Poulin 2003: 753). Pimped prostituted women receive a fragment of their earnings, perhaps enough for sustenance, rarely ever enough to put aside and save. Max Chaleil (2002) cites several examples:

Les filles...sont astreintes à un quota quotidien de 3 300 F sur lequel elles ne conservent que 100 F [...] Chaque fille était tenue de payer à son "protecteur" 30 000 F par semaine, sur lequel il lui laissait 400 F pour la nourriture et le logement [...] Jean Ziegler rappelait qu'à Berlin une prostituée des rues gagnait en 1997 environ 350 dollars par jour; de ce gain, elle n'était autorisée "à garder que 14 dollars" pour assurer sa survie et envoyer les mandats destinés à sa famille.

Pimps keep prostituted women under their control through violence, both threatened and real. As Miller (1997: 122) notes:

Beatings, rape and even murder of prostitutes by pimps is not uncommon and the Council for Prostitution Alternatives, in Portland, Oregon, reported that of the 179 women in their programme who left prostitution in 1990-91, almost half were raped by pimps an average of sixteen times per year. They also calculated that, out of 55 women in their programme, 63 per cent were horribly beaten by pimps an average of 58 times a year.

Poulin (2003: 753) notes that drugs can also play the role of "surrogate" pimp.

Miller's 1995 study (1997: 125) concurs with this argument, as he notes:

In fact, drug dealers acted in exactly the same fashion as pimps had previously, in that nearly all the women working the streets handed the vast majority of their earnings to them and still had to have sex with them.

Of the small percentage of women who claim to chose to prostitute themselves, economic necessity is often a determining factor. O'Neill (2001: 75) found that every prostituted woman within her sample indicated that they had entered prostitution out of economic need. It is also important to bear in mind that in light of social inequalities that restrict women's employment options, prostitution may appear as the *only* economic alternative. One must not confuse necessity with "free choice".

### ***3.3 History of Sexual Abuse***

Not all women chose to prostitute themselves due to economic necessity. Some women, in light of the economic hardships they face, will not prostitute themselves. Other women, who do not face the same degree of economic necessity, will. This does not suggest that prostituted women demonstrate an entrepreneurial spirit that is lacking among non-prostituted women. Nor does this suggest that economically stable women who prostitute themselves have weighed their options, and have found that prostitution presents the best opportunity to make money. Again, this imagery is essentially mythological, and proves baseless against factual evidence.

Research abounds that points to the traumatic sexual history of prostituted women. Estimates of the prevalence of incest among prostitutes range from 65% to 90%. Poulin (2003: 758) notes that The Council for Prostitution Alternatives' Annual Report in 1991 stated that: 85% of prostitute/clients reported history of sexual abuse in childhood; 70% reported incest. A study from France found that between 80 and 95% of prostituted women had a history of sexual abuse. A study in Brazil found that 95% of the girls and adolescents who entered prostitution "freely" came from dysfunctional homes. Another study found that 90% of prostituted women were physically abused, and that family members had sexually abused 74% of these same respondents. That the rate of sexual abuse among prostituted women is much higher than that of non-prostituted women is undeniable.

The effects of sexual abuse at an early age, especially by a family member, can facilitate the choice to become a prostitute in two ways. From a social standpoint, children fleeing their family homes for reasons of abuse are easy targets for pimps, who

wait at bus terminals and train stations in order to prey on runaways. As Maggie O'Neill (2001: 98, 107) notes, there are very few options, from either the "legal" public or private sector, for underage runaways. As O'Neill notes on the situation that affronts underage runaways in the UK:

Currently, children and young people are more likely to have [the] legal framework used against them. They are more likely to be perceived and treated as 'criminalized' than to be exploited.

There is no legal source of income from the state for 16-18-year-olds...Lacking accommodation and not knowing the system can lead to a situation where young people do not claim or are denied benefit and drift around squats, surviving as best they can. Prostitution, for some, is an obvious answer – the body is their only commodity.

O'Neill (2001: 109) also notes that young people in the UK who are technically above the age of consent (16), and who prostitute themselves, face fines for "importuning for immoral earnings or for soliciting". Failure to pay these fines can result in spending time in a youth detention center or in prison.

From a psychological standpoint, the effects of sexual abuse at an early age, especially by a family member, are well documented. O'Neill (2001: 105) notes that the initial sexual abuser often offers rewards, such as goods or money, or affection and care, in exchange for the sexual abuse. This early association between reward and sex allows children and young people to perceive of prostitution as an acceptable means of acquiring whatever it is they desire.

Poulin (2003: 759) notes that sexual abuse at a young age, if not addressed, can often lead to self-destructive behavior and self-loathing. He also notes that numerous researchers have documented the fact that a state of 'emotional dissociation' is a necessary element in dealing with childhood trauma such as rape, sexual abuse, or incest.

Through emotional dissociation, the individual is physically 'there', but is actually emotionally absent. Learning to emotionally dissociate oneself from a sexual situation also allows young people to view prostitution as a viable option. O'Neill (2001: 112) concurs, and notes:

A poorly developed sense of personal power combined with childhood sexual abuse may...motivate self-harm, or suicidal behavior, with prostitution becoming a slow form of self-torture. Combine economic need...with a 'poorly developed sense of power' or 'psychic alienation' and the result is a potentially powerful combination of motivating factors.

Faugier and Sergeant (1997: 123) argues that based on what is known about prostituted women's history of childhood sexual abuse, it is difficult to speak of prostituted women entering into, and staying within, prostitution through their own free choice. Sexual abuse suffered as a child means that these women are "often vulnerable, damaged both physically and psychologically, and may well be lacking necessary sexual skills."

Women who have been abused sexually in childhood may in fact view the pimp as a protector and provider. As alluded to by Silbert and Pines (in Faugier, J. and Sergeant 1997: 123), the abuse meted out by a pimp to a previously sexually abused woman may be interpreted as a natural repetition of the abuse she suffered as a child. The prostituted woman will not flee her pimp's abuse, potentially because she is not psychologically able to perceive of the abuse as unnatural or wrong.

Finally, as Poulin notes (2003: 760), it is questionable whether one can even speak of "free choice" prostitution when the average age of entry into prostitution is well below the age of sexual consent. In America, the average age of entry into prostitution is 13 or 14.

The myth of the “happy hooker” serves to lend the prostitution industry an otherwise unachievable level of social validation. So long as prostitution is held up as a legitimate occupation, and so long as the prostituted woman is portrayed as a free-spirited entrepreneur, the moral compass of society need not concern itself with the prostitution industry. The myth of prostituted women’s freedom of choice works with the presentation of prostitution as a viable career option. This myth goes hand in hand with the previously-debunked notion of the client’s “male sexual needs”, and furnishes the veil behind which the prostituted suffer, and behind which organized crime operates the prostitution industry.

#### ***3.4 Globalization. Increased Disparities in Power, Increased Control***

Already stripped of “free-choice” through pimping, drugs, and psychological damage, the precarious status of women and children in general is further damaged by the effects of globalization. Tremendous disparities in income have come to exist, both internally and externally, between rural and urban areas, and between wealthy and impoverished nations. These disparities, combined with an increased ease of travel between locales of impoverishment to those of wealth, have led to the rapid growth of the human trafficking industry and the sex tourism industry.

The trafficking in women and children is an enterprise in which organized crime is heavily involved. Women and children’s devalued social status in relation to men, coupled with their potential, as commodities, to earn large profits for the prostitution industry, means that they make vulnerable, and ideal, targets for human trafficking.

According to the OCLC Public Affairs Information Service (2004), the human trafficking industry generates an estimated 8-10 billion dollars profit annually.

The quantity of trafficked women and children is staggering. According to Poulin (2003: 739), an annual estimated 400,000 women and children are trafficked within, and out of, South and South-Eastern Asia. From the former Soviet Bloc nations of Eastern and Central Europe, the numbers are estimated at approximately 175,000. Approximately 100,000 women and children are trafficked from Latin America and the Caribbean, while the numbers are estimated at 50,000 from Africa.

A large percentage, if not the majority, of trafficked women and children do not willfully consent to be prostituted. Max Chaleil (2002: 47-48) reports that in 1996, the European Commission estimated that 500,000 women from Eastern Europe were sold to Western Europe. Of these women, it appeared as though only one third would have emigrated had they known that they were going to be prostituted upon their arrival. The remaining two thirds were unwilling victims of sexual trafficking. Francis Miko (2003: 5) describes the process by which women are duped into unwillingly becoming victims of sexual trafficking:

Sometimes women are kidnapped outright in one country and taken forcibly to another. In other cases, victims are lured with phony job offers. Traffickers entice victims to migrate voluntarily with false promises of well-paying jobs in foreign countries. Traffickers advertise these "jobs" as well as marriage opportunities abroad in local newspapers...After providing transportation and false documents to get victims to their destinations they subsequently charge exorbitant fees for their services, often creating life-time debt bondage.

Once in the grasp of organized crime, the process of "breaking" an unwillingly trafficked woman into a prostituted woman is grim. Chaleil (2002: 44) notes that trafficked women face conditioning through rape, and violence. Attempts at escape are often punished by murder. These women are quickly rendered addicts to drugs in an

effort to get them to quickly accept their new role as prostitute. They are then often taken to *maisons d'abattage*, veritable prisons, where they are forced to have sex with 60-80 men per day (Barry 1979, Chaleil 1998, Poulin 2003). As Barley (in Chaleil 2002: 162) notes:

Tout comme les aviculteurs qui pratiquent l'élevage intensif de la volaille ont créé le terme de "batterie hens" pour les poules que l'on met au forçage dans les cages, soit pour les inciter à pondre, soit pour les engraisser, la technique des modernes trafiquants de femmes a enrichi la langue anglaise de cette expression, les "batterie girls" pour désigner les filles constamment maintenues sous l'effet de la drogue et gardées, elles aussi dans des "cages" pour servir d'esclaves sexuelles.

### ***3.5 Global Complicity***

As Chaleil (2002: 44) notes, the traffic and prostitution of women and children on a global scale is not a haphazard, spontaneous, occurrence. The movement of hundreds of thousands of unwilling human beings from one locale to another, and the subsequent "breaking", and imprisonment, of these individuals, necessarily requires a well-structured organization. The sheer size and scope of this organization means that, like the prostitution industry, it is not a covert operation. For the human trafficking industry to function, criminal groups require both the direct and indirect assistance of all levels of government of those countries involved in human trafficking and prostitution, that is to say, of all countries of the world.

On a small-scale, Chaleil (2002: 50) cites the example of the French Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria, which, in exchange for bribery payments, issued thousands of visas to Mafia-linked tourist agencies. The visas went to young Bulgarian girls under the pretext that they were going to work in French businesses. In reality, the girls were trafficked in

French brothels. Galster (1998) of "The Global Survival Network" also uncovered large-scale government corruption within Russia. As Miko (2003: 5) notes:

According to Global Survival Network, an NGO group, Russian traffickers can obtain false documentation in order to enable a minor to travel to destination countries to work as a prostitute from corrupt officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approximately \$800.

Law enforcement agencies are also frequently complicit. Of Julia O'Connell Davidson's (2003: 20) Thai respondent sample, 87 out of 90 respondents (97%) were police officers. 65 of these 90 (73%) respondents answered that they had purchased sex. 89% of these 65 clients answered that they had heard of women being trafficked into prostitution, while only 71% answered that if they heard of a woman being unwillingly trafficked, they should "Report it to the police." Poulin (2003: 737) notes that within Thailand, of an estimated two million prostituted women, approximately one million have been trafficked from southern China, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar. This would suggest that not only were O'Connell Davidson's sample of Thai police officers aware of the presence of trafficked prostitutes in Thailand, but the majority of the sample were actually *having sex* with these trafficked women. As Miko (2003: 5) notes:

The disinterest and in some cases even complicity of governments is another big problem. Many law-enforcement agencies and governments ignore the plight of trafficking victims and downplay the scope of the trafficking problem...Local police officers often fear reprisals from criminal gangs so they find it easier to deny knowledge of trafficking.

The existence of corruption and complicity within the lower echelons of the bureaucratic and legal enforcement spheres is, however, insufficient to account for the global scope of the human trafficking and prostitution industries. The massive scale of these industries requires the actual failure of the legal system on a structural level. Quite

simply, organized crime requires the support, whether outright or through its failure or inability to act, of the governments of the countries in which it operates.

Poulin (2003: 743-744) notes that governments are, in effect, responsible for creating the human trafficking trade. By implementing laws that support the international free-flow of capital and merchandise, disparities in standards of living between nations are legally endorsed. Yet, by implementing laws that render migration illegal, individuals are not allowed to leave their country of origin in search of work and a better quality of life. The fact that migration is criminalized does not decrease the desire of international migrants to improve their lives, nor does it decrease the flow of migration from poorer to richer nations. It merely places migrants in a situation where they are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse from all angles. They are trafficked by organized criminal groups in order to circumvent the legalities in an illegal process. And once at their destination, they are considered, and treated as, guilty criminals. As Miko (2003: 5) notes:

The priority placed on stemming illegal immigration in many countries...has resulted in treatment of trafficking cases as a problem of illegal migration, thus treating victims as criminals. When police raid brothels, women are often detained and punished, subjected to human rights abuses in jail, and swiftly deported. Few steps have been taken to provide support, health care, and access to justice. Few victims dare testify against the traffickers or those who hold them, fearing retribution for themselves and their families since most governments do not offer stays of deportation or adequate protection for witnesses.

Poulin (2003: 745) notes that poorer nations encourage their citizens to migrate abroad. The dividends these migrants send back to their countries of origin provides a valuable source of hard currency to impoverished governments. In Thailand, dividends from migrant labour increased almost one hundred-fold between 1985 and 1995. Also, as noted by the Galster (1998) of Global Survival Network:

Consider the complicity of sending countries, such as the Phillipines, whose national economy relies on labor export and the hard currency sent home by

migrant women, without assuming any responsibility for the conditions under which they work.

Chaleil (2002: 44, 53) notes that for organized crime groups, prostitution has become almost as profitable a racket as the drug trade. The price paid for a woman or child is almost assuredly recouped in a week's time. The penalties for pimping are also a great deal less severe than they are for drug-dealing. This would suggest that there is less concern regarding the social effects of trafficking and prostituting women and children than there is with the potential effects of drugs.

### ***3.6 The Effects of Legalization***

Legalization of the prostitution industry, often touted as a counteractive measure against the stranglehold of organized crime upon the trafficking and prostitution industries, in reality does little, if anything, to improve the welfare of the prostituted. In fact, the legalization of prostitution in developed nations such as Holland and Germany has made these locales preferred destinations for trafficked women and children. Poulin (2003: 738) notes that in Amsterdam, 80% of the prostituted women come from abroad, and 70% of these women are "without papers". This is compared to 1965, when 95% of prostituted women in Amsterdam were Dutch. In 1997 there were an estimated 30,000 prostituted women in Holland, meaning that almost 17,000 of these women were illegal immigrants, most probably victims of the human trafficking industry. While the number of prostituted women within Holland has increased significantly since legalization in 2000, only 4% of prostituted women are legally registered.

Janice Raymond (1998), from the "Coalition Against Trafficking in Women", concurs with Poulin, and notes:

State-sponsored prostitution is a form of state-sponsored sexual terrorism posing as sexual and economic freedom for women...There is a fundamental connection between legal recognition of prostitution industries and the increase in victims of sex trafficking. Nowhere do we see this relationship more clearly than in countries advocating prostitution as an employment choice, or who foster the legalization of prostitution, or who support the decriminalization of the sex industry. Such countries promote sex trafficking by institutionalizing prostitution as lawful work, and by legally transforming pimps and traffickers into sex industry entrepreneurs, brothels into acceptable businesses and entertainment centres, and prostitution customers into legitimate sexual consumers.

### *3.7 How Has This Happened?*

The information contained within this chapter has relied upon a review of readily available information. The factual evidence surrounding the state of the prostitution industry is not new, nor is it groundbreaking. It is not as though the plight of the prostituted woman is unknown. Therefore, one cannot claim that the deceptive image of Barry's "happy hooker" has effectively fleeced the general populace. Indeed, as has been shown, the prostitution industry could not have developed into its present, global, incarnation, but for the complicity of national and international governmental and non-governmental bodies. Many "legal" organizations not only turn a blind eye to the human trafficking and prostitution industries, they in fact assure their smooth functioning.

Placing the client within a theoretical discourse concerning sexuality, as presented in the previous chapter of this thesis, was also not an altogether novel idea. It is clear that the purchase of sex is an expression of male desire for complete power and control over a woman within a sexual encounter. It has also become clear that this desire is a social construct, and is in no way linked to a biological imperative.

Statistical evidence demonstrates that not all men accept, or act out on, the socially constructed link between their own sexual desire, and aggression and dominance. In fact, men who purchase sex are almost always a minority of the sample male

population. One must ponder why the majority does not rally against this known-to-be morally reprehensible industry. Granted, there are pockets of resistance against the prostitution industry, but as of yet these have not captured the social imagination.

Poulin (2003: 748) theorizes that there is no large-scale resistance against the human trafficking or prostitution industries because these two industries simply follow the financial formula endorsed by the expansion of neo-liberal globalization. Market relations pervade previously “non-commercial” zones of relation and transform these once “not-for-sale” regions in objectified commodities. As Poulin notes:

Dans la mondialisation néo-libérale actuelle, rien ne semble pouvoir échapper au processus de marchandisation et à la “monétarisation des rapports sociaux... Cela signifie que l’approfondissement de la marchandisation a pour conséquence la destruction systématique des relations sociales antérieures en faveur de nouvelles relations qui légitiment l’appropriation privée qui leur est intrinsèque.

### ***3.8 Failure of the Sexual Revolution***

Jean-Claude Guillebaud (1998) posits that the commercialization of women and children, and sexual relations with them, has not been the result of an unhindered march towards globalization. Guillebaud claims that the path towards commercialization was cleared of all roadblocks of moral indignation by the failure of the ‘sexual revolution’ to overthrow the prevalent ideology of paternalistic capitalism.

The theoretical framework of the sexual revolution was heavily reliant upon the ideas of Wilhelm Reich. Reich’s theory concerning sexuality is reminiscent of Marcuse’s, expounded upon in the previous chapter. Briefly, Reich believed in the presence of a sexual instinct, whose “nature” was peaceful. Repression and regulation of the sexual instinct, therefore, was unnecessary. In fact, repression and regulation of the sexual

instinct gave rise to sexual violence and perversions, which would otherwise not naturally occur.

Reich argued that the type of social repression and regulation experienced by the sexual instinct was not arbitrary, but was constructed, and imposed, by the bourgeois class. The bourgeois class presented sexuality as a dangerous force, whose repression and regulation was necessary for the general social well being. In fact, Reich argued, bourgeois-induced repression and regulation of the sexual instinct merely served to benefit the bourgeois class, because it worked to justify the rendering of the sexual energies of the working class into profit-generating labour.

Reich's theory, because it claimed to have identified the nature of the sexual instinct, had the effect of creating a taboo surrounding the discussion of restrictions upon sexuality. Since, according to Reich, sexuality was a singularly positive force, all morals and laws that restricted sexual expression were unnecessary, and must serve an ideology that sought to control the sexual instinct at the expense of others. Therefore, restriction and regulation of the sexual instinct was considered unequivocally negative, and in need of abolishment.

In effect, the ideology of the sexual revolution signaled the end of all discussion surrounding the validity of sexually restrictive morals and laws. All restrictions upon sexuality were indicative of class interests, and were therefore completely invalid in light of the greater social good that would inevitably arise from free sexual expression. What inevitably resulted was a sexual ideology of "anything goes". As Guillebaud (1998: 110) notes; "Dans notre esprit, il va de soi que tout "ordre moral" a ses profiteurs et, donc, ses stratèges qui veulent dérober quelque chose du peuple."

Yet, according to Guillebaud, Reich's 'sexual revolution' was a failure. Guillebaud argues that proponents of the sexual revolution did not manage to overthrow the dominant ideology of the bourgeoisie, that of paternalistic capitalism. Reich's vision of an unequivocal rejection of restrictive measures upon sexuality, and a rejection of discussions surrounding such measures, was, however, understood by the bourgeois class to be the driving force behind the sexual revolution. Paying lip-service to this rejection of restrictive measures was also not incompatible with the ideology of paternalistic capitalism. Incapable of clashing outright against this vision of sexual liberation, seemingly so imperative to supporters of the sexual revolution, the bourgeois class instead appropriated it, and harmlessly absorbed it into the bourgeois ideology. This absorption allowed it to appear *as though* the sexual revolution had been successful, in that it became ideologically fashionable to reject all morals and laws regarding sexual activity. In this manner, an attack on the social inequalities of power between the sexes, inherent in the bourgeois ideology and arguably the true causative factor of sexual violence, was never mounted.

Guillebaud argues that the marriage of paternalistic capitalism with a socially accepted rejection of even deigning to discuss the need for restrictions upon sexuality has had major repercussions. The individual search for pleasure has become paramount, and any hindrance to it, be it in the form of law or moral opposition, is seen as an affront against personal freedom. However, paternalism intrinsically places a higher value on men than on women or children. The resulting scenario is one in which male pleasure has become paramount over that of women and children, and in which, subsequently, women and children are reduced to the status of pleasure-providing objects.

As Sheila Jeffreys (1990: 95) notes, an entire industry has surfaced that endorses the unhindered male and female quest for pleasure as just. However, male and female pleasure are presented as two distinct entities. Women are taught that their liberated sexuality expresses itself as a desire to be pleasure-providing objects for men. Told that this sexually objectified role is the fruit of the successful sexual revolution, in reality this is little more than propaganda. This propaganda surreptitiously indoctrinates women to willingly renounce their own moral restrictions against men's various, and potentially degrading and harmful, desires. Those women who are "sexually inhibited", or hold reservations to particular acts, are portrayed as "prudes" and throwbacks to an unnecessarily restrictive, pre-sexual revolution, era.

The naturally objectified status of women and children lends itself to justify the prostitution industry. The main justification of the prostitution industry is that it provides unhindered pleasure to men, and to women, because their pleasure expresses itself through objectification. The prostitution industry is excused, even commended as a demonstration of the success of the sexual revolution.

Guillebaud (1998: 110-111) notes that the failure of the sexual revolution, however, has meant that social inequalities of power between men and women, and between men and children, have unquestioningly penetrated the realm of the sexual. There is no longer any moral recourse against sexual inequality, or against prostitution, because sexual inequality and prostitution represent the hard-won spoils of the sexual revolution. In any case, discussions of morality surrounding sexuality are an affront against one's freedom of expression, and are therefore, by principle, shunned.

What remains is a social ideology that promotes an uninhibited, individualistic, quest for pleasure, directly linked to the market economy and paternalism. Pleasure becomes synonymous with expenditure and masculinity. To those who accept this ideology, the role of client, and the role of the prostituted woman, are two of the most natural expressions of the search for individual pleasure.

The supposed "freedom of expression" that justifies the client/prostitute duality, in light of the conditions to which prostituted women are subjected to, is shown to be a completely one-sided affair. As argued by the Coalition Against Trafficking of Women (1998):

If prostitution is a form of sexual freedom and expression for women, then women should be able to determine and demand the sex that happens in prostitution. Obviously, this is not the case. In fact, while prostitution is one of the most debated gender issues, discussions almost never address the sex of prostitution. When a German customer of an Filipina prostitute demands to take a photograph to show his friends back home of the "two best things about the Philippines": a beer bottle in the woman's vagina, whose sexuality is being expressed? When a group of men pay a woman so they can simultaneously ejaculate on her, what sexuality is that? When Patpong offers "blow job bars" and entertainment programs that tout "Pussy pingpong ball, pussy shoot banana, pussy smoke cigarette, big dildo show, fish push inside her, egg push into her cunt, long eggplant push into her cunt," (Odzer 7) or shows of knives and razor blades in women's vaginas" that are the live versions of the huge pornography industry's images of hand grenades in women's vaginas, live rats coming out of them and dogs penetrating women, is this "adult entertainment," sexual recreation, sexual liberation? In fact, it is true that freedom of expression is amply being exercised there, but whose sexuality is being expressed and what ideological statements are made about women? What is being demonstrated is a male will to dehumanize women.

#### 4. The Client. Demographic Factors.

The male client of female prostitution is one of three vital components in the prostitution relationship, of which the other two are the prostituted woman herself, and her pimp. However, in terms of the volume of research done on the phenomenon of prostitution, the client remains vastly underrepresented in comparison with the prostituted woman. Existing research has demonstrated that not all men are clients, and that their preponderance within society varies from country to country (O'Connell Davidson *et al.* 2003, Manson 2003; Haavio-Mannila & Rotkirch 2000; Leridon *et al.* 1998; Lewin *et al.* 1998; Wellings *et al.* 1993; Michael *et al.* 1994, Prieur, A., Taksdal, A. 1993, Marttila 2003: OSCE, Finnish Report on Trafficking in Human Beings 2002, Sullivan & Simon 1998: NHSL 1992).

This would suggest that the presence or absence of certain societal factors, the nature of which have been addressed in the first chapter of this thesis, affect the potentiality of client behavior within the total male population. These include an association between sexual pleasure and power, as well as an association between the purchase of sex as a means to gain rank within a male hegemony, whether through a demonstration of one's "sexuality", or one's ability to pay.

This chapter addresses the possibility that within the total male population, there is a dissimilar affectation of these influences upon men. Even if the dominant ideology supports the purchase of sex, certain demographic groups might be less prone to act out upon this ideology and become clients. For example, within Thailand, while 75% of Thai men appear to purchase sex, 25% do not. Do the 25% who do not purchase sex share any

common demographic features? Unfortunately, there is no existing research on this matter.

However, a limited amount of demographic research exists that is related to clients of countries where the minority chooses to purchase sex. From this research, this chapter will address the fact that certain sub-groups of men may be more prone to accept an ideology that promotes the purchase of sex, even when such an ideology is not considered “dominant”. That is to say, are particular sub-groups of men more prone to accept the link between sexual pleasure and power, and what can be said of the demographic characteristics of these sub-groups? As well, are particular sub-groups of men more likely to perceive of purchased sex as a means of gaining or establishing rank within a male hegemony, and what can be said of these sub-groups? An analysis and comparison of each of the major demographic categories identified in the existing research will provide the basis in attempting to answer these questions.

#### *4.1 Age*

In general, studies have found that the age range for clients of prostitutes appears to encapsulate all sexually active males. The average age is most often in the mid-thirties, which most probably reflects the average age of the general population, and is probably also a reflection on that segment of the male population with the greatest amount of disposable income.

In 2000, Martin Monto (2002: 1098-1099) administered a survey to 1,342 men in First Offender programs in California (996), Oregon (77), and Nevada (269). All respondents were voluntary participants in these “deferred adjudication programs” which

acted as an alternate court sentencing following their arrests for attempting to hire a prostituted woman on the street. Indicative of almost all other studies, Monto's study found that the average age of the respondents was 39, while the range was from 18 to 84 years.

In 1995-1996, Rosie Campbell (1998: 159) undertook a project that examined female street prostitution in inner city Liverpool. By placing advertisements in local newspapers for two weeks, as well as leaving leaflets at the Genito-Urinary Medicine clinic at the Royal Liverpool Hospital, Campbell was able to organize interviews with a number of voluntary male clients. She found that the age range of clients varied from between 18 to 71 years, with 89% of interviewees being between 18 and 49.

In 1991 and 1992, Jordan (1997: 57) organized a series of 13 in-depth qualitative interviews with male clients in New Zealand. After correspondence with one or two clients in a national magazine, the remainder of the interviewees came forward voluntarily to offer their perspective. The respondents' ages ranged from 27-74, most being in 30-40 years age group

In 1997, Elizabeth W. Plummer, Jane Chetwynd, Anna Reed and Sandra J. Gifford (1997: 168) interviewed 24 clients of New Zealand massage parlors. Their interview sample ranged in age from 23 to 78 years old. The age distribution was as follows; 5 men were in their 20s, 3 men were in their 30s, 5 were in their 40s, 6 were in their 50s and the remaining 5 were older than 60

In 1991, Matthew Freund, Nancy Lee, and Terri Leonard (1991: 579) published a study concerning the sexual behaviors of 101 male clients of female street prostitutes.

They conducted interviews by approaching clients, with a 62% response rate. While there was no given range of ages in their study, the mean age was 39.8 years.

In 2000, Luke Xantidis, and Marita P. McCabe (2000: 165) administered short questionnaires to 66 volunteer clients of prostituted women and 60 non-clients. The questionnaire meant to assess demographic characteristics, as well as sex role, social-sexual effectiveness, and sensation-seeking behavior. Xantidis and McCabe found that clients and non-clients did not differ in age.

In a study published in 2000, Janet Lever and Deanne Dolnick (2000: 90) analyzed questionnaires received from 998 street prostitutes, and 83 higher priced 'call girls'. The responses of both the street prostitutes and call girls were similar concerning age. When asked the age of their last client, both groups of respondents answered that the age range of their clients was from age 20 or less up to over 65 years of age. For the street prostitutes, 35% were aged 21-35, 26% were aged 36-40, and 27% were aged 41-50. For the call girls, 32% were aged 21-35, 26% were aged 36-40, and 21% were aged 41-50.

In 2003, Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) published a study in which she analyzed the texts of 24 Finnish clients through the Internet. Marttila also managed to conduct in-depth interviews with five of these clients. The age distribution of clients of her client sample was between 20-60 years. The average age of Marttila's sample was 38 years old.

In 1982, Holzman and Pines (1982: 99) published a study in which they conducted phenomenological interviews with 30 clients. They obtained their client sample through social networks that the authors had at the start of their research, or were

subsequently discovered by the authors. The ages of these clients ranged from 27 to 52 years old, with the majority in their mid-30s.

In 1985, Lewis Diana (1985: 182) published a book in which he designated a chapter to clients. Diana attempted to interview clients, but found it “virtually impossible”. Instead, Diana conducted “participant observation” in brothels, truck stops, roadside lounges and massage parlors. He managed to collect data on 501 clients, the majority of whom were of young adults and middle-aged men. Almost 80% of these men were between 25 to 50.

These studies are problematic because they do not consider when the client first began to purchase sex. The notion of an “age of first purchase” is relevant because one might then gain an understanding of when, if ever, men are more susceptible to the social influences that might lead to a purchase of sex. Having a “snapshot” of the average age of clients is inconclusive, because one cannot know if clients of average age are making their first purchase, and hence are most susceptible at that particular age. Or, whether clients of the average age were, at some earlier point in their lives, most susceptible to these influences. In this case, their decision to purchase sex is merely a continuation of this already-formed personal ideology. Thusly, one cannot claim that clients of average age are “bored with their sex lives”, or are experiencing a “mid-life crisis”. While these reductions are pleasing from a biological standpoint, they cannot be founded upon this data.

#### ***4.2 Purchasing Sex, Age, & Rites of Passage***

On the other hand, Sullivan and Simon (1998: 149) did find a relationship between age and purchasing sex. In 1998, Elroy Sullivan and William Simon published a

study based upon an analysis of the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs). One thousand five hundred and eleven randomly sampled men, from all 50 American states, were administered the NHSLs, between February and October of 1992. Sullivan and Simon found that slightly more than 1 in 20 men aged eighteen to twenty-four had ever purchased sex, while for men aged fifty-three to sixty, the rate was more than 1 in 3.

Julia O'Connell Davidson's (2003: 13) multi-nation study of 2003 also reveals two meaningful discrepancies in clients' age. Firstly, O'Connell Davidson's team found that clients were much more likely to purchase their first sexual encounter at an early age. Of a sample of 163 clients, 68% had made their first sexual purchase when they were twenty-one or under.

Secondly, O'Connell Davidson's team found a direct relation between the age at which a man first purchases sex and his propensity to continue to purchase sex. Of eighty men who reported first buying sex when they were eighteen or under, 88% stated that they continued to buy sex. Of eighty-three men who first bought sex when they were twenty-one or under, 76% stated that they continued to buy sex. Of thirty-seven men who first bought sex when they were twenty-two or above, only 70% stated that they continued to buy sex.

It is important to note that O'Connell Davidson's findings are weighted by Thai respondents (n=63), whose survey and interview responses endorse the potential effects of social pressure and social perception upon client behavior. Davidson (2003: 12) found that within Thailand in particular the act of buying sex can be "part of a 'rite of passage', as well as a ritualized means of consolidating relationships with male friends."

Thai and Indian interview subjects recounted stories of how purchasing sex is often related to marking passages in time. These include boys visiting prostituted women to mark the end of their schooldays and to establish their status as adult, and seniors taking new university students to prostituted women to demonstrate themselves as 'real men'.

O'Connell Davidson's findings appear to contradict those of Sullivan and Simon. The majority of O'Connell Davidson's sample group responded that they first purchased sex when they were twenty-one or under. Sullivan and Simon, on the other hand, found that just slightly more than 1 in 20 men between eighteen and twenty-four responded that they had paid for sex, and that the propensity to pay for sex increases with age.

One can put forth two possible explanations for these findings. Firstly, it is possible that throughout the course of one's life, a man is exposed to more opportunities to choose to purchase sex. As one's life continues, one is more prone to act out upon at least one of these opportunities. Unfortunately, Sullivan and Simon's findings did not ask when these men's first purchase of sex occurred, so this explanation must remain in the realm of conjecture.

A second possible explanation is that social pressures and social perceptions are time and culture sensitive, and that these have a direct effect on the propensity of men in general, but particularly young men, to purchase sex. Sullivan and Simon (1998: 149) suggest that in the not-so-distant American past, purchasing sex was considered a more socially acceptable rite of passage' for young men entering into 'manhood'. This provides a potential explanation as to why, when analyzing the findings of a 'snapshot' survey conducted in 1992, older men would have been more likely, *when they were*

*younger*, to have purchased sex, than currently younger men. This potential explanation, while not possible to prove using these two studies, would then link Sullivan and Simon's data with O'Connell Davidson's findings.

#### ***4.3 Marital Status & Sexual Partners***

Most studies find that client samples are no more or less likely to be married than non-client samples (Jordan 1997: 57, Plummer *et al.* 1997: 166, Freund *et al.* 1991: 579, Diana 1985: 183, Moore 1999: 10, Holzman & Pines 1982: 101, Xantidis *et al.* 2000: 165). If one simply compares the marital status of clients against the marital status of non-clients, it would appear then that there is no correlation between marital status and the propensity to purchase sex.

However, such a comparison overlooks the most basic characteristic that differentiates clients and non-clients. The client has chosen to pay for sex, while the non-client has not. Historically, purchasing sex has not been linked to breaching one's monogamous relationship with one's wife. However, the decision to purchase sex may be indicative of a particular ideology vis-à-vis women, and sex, in general. This ideology might link the purchase of sex, and frequent, impersonal, sexual encounters with a particular definition of "masculinity", as though through having sex with different women, or through buying sex, one could establish one's maleness. In support of this possibility, several studies have uncovered meaningful variations between the sexual habits of clients and non-clients, regardless of their matrimonial state.

Monto's (Monto *et al.* 2002: 1096) client sample was not as likely as the national sample to report being currently married, and was more likely to report never having

been married. Married clients were much more likely to describe their marriages as unhappy. While lacking in Monto's study, discerning whether the client chose to purchase sex because his particular marriage had become unhappy or whether the client was unhappy with the idea of monogamy with *any* woman, would have been of interest.

Monto's client sample was much less likely to have had one sexual partner over the past year. The client sample was much more likely to report having had multiple partners, but somewhat less frequent sexual relations over the past year than the national sample: 53.9% of "repeat users" in Monto's study (2000: 79) agreed with the statement "I like to have a variety of sexual partners", as opposed to 27.9% "first-timer" clients. This would suggest that clients differ ideologically from non-clients in one of two potential areas. Clients may be simply unable to maintain a relationship with *one* woman, potentially because of their ideological views of themselves, as "natural men", as well as of the functionality of "women". Conversely, clients may place a higher ideological valuation upon sex with numerous women rather than more frequent sex with one woman, as opposed to non-clients.

This is important to note, because it brings into question the classic portrayal of the client as sexually "unlucky", and thus resorting to purchased sex as a "last resort". Instead, one must consider that the client is motivated to seek out a frequency, or type, of sex that only a prostituted woman can provide. It may be this perception of what constitutes sexual pleasure that drives the client to purchase sex, not his "natural" inability to acquire unpaid sex.

Sullivan and Simon's (1998: 141, 151-152) data support Monto's findings. They found that men who reported having solicited a prostituted woman had more lifetime

sexual partners and sexual cohabitation arrangements than did non-clients. For those men who reported having had ten or more sexual partners, there was a 17% increase in the likelihood that they had purchased sex from a prostituted woman.

In 1993, Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 106) published the findings of a survey and interview process that examined Norwegian clients of prostituted women. Their study also supports the presence of relationship-discontent (potentially a dislike for monogamy) and “hyper-sexuality” among clients of prostituted women. Prieur and Taksdal’s client sample had fewer established relationships with women when compared to non-client men. The client sample was also more often discontented with their marital and sexual relationships than were other married men. Studies by Moore (1999) and Xantidis (2000) also support the notion of higher levels of “sensation seeking” and “hyper-sexuality” among clients of prostitutes.

#### ***4.4 Race and Ethnicity***

Non-American based studies have generally paid little importance to the issue of race and ethnicity within client populations. Within American studies, some contradictory evidence does surface, and warrants examination.

Monto’s (2002: 1098) client sample was comprised of just over 50% Caucasians, about 20% “Latino”, while African Americans and Asians were underrepresented. Monto (2000: 69) observes, however, that these findings may not reflect any general trend, and may simply reflect the dispersion of racial and ethnic populations within the three Western cities in which the surveys were administered. Freund et al.’s study (1991: 579) endorses Monto’s findings. Freund’s study in Camden, New Jersey found that the racial

composition of their 101 clients was similar to the general population of the area; 65% white, 33% black, and 2% Asian.

Lever and Dolnick (2000: 90) also support Monto. They found that the race/ethnic composition of “last clients” of street prostitutes, who charged a median of 30\$ per sexual encounter, was 34% White, 40% African-American, 23% Hispanic or Latino, 2% Asian, and 1% Other. The race/ethnic composition of “last clients” of call girls, who charged a median of 200\$ per sexual encounter, was as follows; 82% White, 1% African-American, 5% Hispanic or Latino, 7% Asian, and 5% Other.

It is interesting to note, however, that these findings run almost completely opposite to those brought forth by Sullivan and Simon. Sullivan and Simon (1998: 150) found that twice the proportion of African American and Hispanic respondents answered that they had paid for sex than did Caucasian males. Sullivan and Simon attributed this finding to the argument that African American and Hispanic men, as minorities, have fewer opportunities to affirm themselves as “men”. The realm of the sexual becomes the singular outlet in which the minority male can enjoy “self-masculine affirmation”. This argument supposes that minority males actually do purchase more sex than do males from the majority population.

Sullivan and Simon’s argument coincides with the notion raised in the first chapter of this thesis that certain sub-groups of males will utilize sexual encounters, and purchased sexual encounters interchangeably, as a means of establishing rank in a male hegemony.

Sullivan and Simon’s findings are also important because they provide a potential defining characteristic of the men who comprise such sub-groups. Male sub-groups who

perceive their level of power to be lower than that of the majority may be prone to view purchased sex, as a measure (and potentially the only measure) to acquire the pleasure/power duality. When one conceptualizes sex as pleasure attained through male aggression and female submission, and the acceptance of payment on the part of the woman as the “ultimate” commodification, then purchasing sex is an assured means of obtaining power.

However, while this explanation does link itself to the theoretical discourse surrounding the meaning of the purchase of sex, it does not resolve the contradiction between Sullivan and Simon’s findings, and those of Monto, Freund *et al.*, and Lever and Dolnick. Another potential explanation is that the latter studies captured information from clients caught, or observed, in the process of being a client. In these studies a clients’ race/ethnicity was “laid bare”, so to speak. The Sullivan and Simon study relied upon “offered” information. It may be that to the majority American male, the act of being a client carries a greater negative stigma with it than to the minority American male. A study that relies upon offered information might find that minority respondents are more apt to answer questions concerning client status honestly than would majority male, i.e. white, populations. Clearly there is the need for more research concerning whether perceptions of male sexuality and hegemony are divided along racial or ethnic lines.

#### ***4.5 Family History***

O’Connell Davidson (2003: 14) found that a high percentage of all respondents, both clients and non-clients, either affirmed that they had been touched sexually as a

child (13%), or that they did not remember (9%). Dealing with clients alone, 19% reported childhood sexual abuse, while 13% said they could not remember. The survey teams from India and Japan reported figures that were particularly high. In India, 50% of clients had been touched, or could not remember. In Japan, 36% responded positively.

O'Connell Davidson comments, however, that these findings do not support the idea of a causal relationship between client experiences of childhood sexual abuse and prostitute-use in adulthood. It is possible that among the population as a whole, individuals who experienced episodes of childhood sexual abuse are evenly distributed, so that a survey of any given sub-group would reveal similar patterns.

Monto (2000: 73) found that 14% of his client sample had been touched sexually by an adult when they were children. 34% of his client sample's parents divorced when they were children. 14% of Monto's (2002: 1106) respondents responded that they had been physically hurt or abused by an adult for no reason during childhood. It is of interest to note that these clients in particular were more likely to endorse factors of power and control towards women. 45.5% of repeat users within Monto's study (2000: 79) agreed with the statement "I like to be in control when I'm having sex." as opposed to 35.6% of "first-timer" clients.

While these finding remains inconclusive, one must consider the link between a perception of powerlessness as an adult, and the feeling of powerlessness one experiences as an abused child. While only conjecture, these men may associate sex in particular as an area of their lives in which they feel powerlessness. For these men, sexuality could potentially become an area in which they over-compensate externally for an internal

feeling of powerlessness. These men might more readily subscribe to, and act out upon, the ideology of the prostituted woman as a commodity to be controlled.

On a contrary note, Sullivan and Simon found that clients were no more likely than non-clients to have come from “broken homes.” (Sullivan & Simon 1998: 147) However, Sullivan and Simon do not clarify what constitutes a broken home. In light of this contradiction, but nevertheless its potential importance, childhood sexual experiences of clients appears to be an area in need of further study.

#### ***4.6 Education***

Monto’s study (2002: 1098) found that almost 11% of his client sample had obtained a masters degree or higher, while close to 24% had obtained a bachelors degree. 35% of his client sample responded that they had some college education, 18% had earned a high-school diploma, while 10% of respondents had not graduated from high school. Holzman and Pines (1982: 100) who gathered data from clients they encountered through their personal social networks, found that all of their sample had graduated high school, while most had completed four years in college. This most probably reflects more heavily on the social circles of the two researchers, rather than on any correlation between higher education and clients. Xantidis (2000: 165) found no correlation between education and the propensity to pay for sex.

Diana’s (1985: 183) study found that 25% of his client sample had completed the 8<sup>th</sup> grade or lower, while 59.9% had completed high school. Diana relied more heavily on data gathered from truck stops and roadside rest areas, which probably accounts for his sample having less in the way of formal education.

Sullivan and Simon's research (1998: 150-151) did find a trend associated with education and purchasing sex. Sullivan and Simon found that men with little formal education and men with advanced levels of education were more likely than men with a "middle ground" of education to solicit prostitutes.

Sullivan and Simon argue that this trend is due to the fact those men with little formal education may find themselves in greater proximity to the areas where street prostitution is carried out. Also, men with little formal education may choose to express their "maleness" through the purchase of sex. This may be due to the fact that uneducated men might feel more powerless as opposed to educated men, and have fewer available means to obtain power other than the purchase of sex.

As for men with advanced degrees of formal education, Sullivan and Simon argue that these men allow themselves to explore areas of sexuality that may seem "off-limits" to men of moderate education. Sullivan and Simon also point to the fact that there is a "rather strong" relationship between "erotic" interest and education.

Another possible explanation is that men with little formal education, as well as those with advanced degrees, subscribe to ideologies that do not stigmatize the purchase of sex as greatly as the "mainstream" American ideology. It may not be that they are more prone to purchase sex than the general population, but simply feel less shame in giving an honest response. Because of the contradictory findings of current studies, it would seem as though there is a need for more research in this area.

#### ***4.7 Occupation & Income***

Aside from “homosocial” occupations, such as sailor or soldier, it appears as though there is no correlation between occupation, income, and the propensity to pay for sex. Because of their exceptional effect upon men’s penchant to purchase sex, a subsection is devoted exclusively to homosocial occupations.

Most of Monto’s (2002: 1098-1099) sample responded that they worked full-time. 7% claimed to be executives and major professionals, while 6% responded that they were business managers. 8% claimed to be small business owners, 9% were employed in clerical or technical positions, 11% worked at skilled manual labour, while 14% labored in unskilled positions. Jordan’s (1997: 57) sample also varied in occupation and class background, and incomes ranged from a reported 14,000\$ to upwards of 90,000\$. Plummer’s (1997: 166) study reported that five of the men had manual occupations, nine were from professional or farming backgrounds and the remainder were in business, sales or were self-employed. Diana (1985: 183) reported that 56.6% of his sample had white-collar jobs. Sullivan and Smith (1998: 147) reported no difference in the habits of men of different income brackets to purchase sex. Xantidis (2000: 165) reported no correlation between type of occupation and propensity to pay for sex. Lever and Dolnick’s (2000: 90) study also reported no meaningful variation in income.

Interestingly, in a study published in 1999, Susan Moore (1999: 10) administered a survey to 400 heterosexual men and women in Melbourne, Australia. Moore distributed the survey equally among white-collar and blue-collar occupations, and students. Of the 186 men who responded to the survey, 34 answered that they had paid for sex. Of these 34 men, blue-collar workers were over-represented with 21 clients, or 61.8% of the total

client population. Men employed in white-collar jobs were underrepresented with 4 clients (11.8%). Student clients approximately represented the total sample with 9 clients, or 26.5% of the total client population.

The problem with the findings of these studies is that they may more likely reflect national, rather than occupational, tendencies. Aside from Moore's findings, it would appear that income and occupation have little relevance to men's tendencies to purchase sex. The question is, then, do Moore's findings represent a tendency of Australian men in general, or of Australian "blue-collar" workers, or of "blue collar" workers in general? It is clear that more research is needed in order to answer this, and related, questions.

#### ***4.8 Homosocial Occupations***

In their study of Norwegian clients, Prieur and Taksdal's (1993: 107) found that of the men who self-identified themselves as clients, the majority had purchased sex only a few times, usually while abroad. Prieur and Taksdal classified these individuals as "occasional clients". In response to their demographic survey, Prieur and Taksdal's "occasional client" group was similar in almost all characteristics to the general sample. However, when Prieur and Taksdal began to conduct in-depth interviews with identified clients, a smaller group of frequent users, with demographic characteristics that were noticeably dissimilar to both the "occasional user" and non-client sample group, emerged.

The first piece of information reported by Prieur and Taksdal was that several of the frequent users were sailors. Both interviewers were surprised at the normalcy in which the sailors described their experiences with prostitutes, as though sex with

prostitutes was for them an expression of normal sexuality. Several of these sailors recounted that the prostitution experience had more to do with joining a perceived “male community” than with sexual activities. One is reminded immediately of the socialization pressures and processes at work upon young men in Davidson O’Connell’s study.

Other sailors reported that their client behavior was in emulation of their superiors at the time, and that their initial encounter often occurred when they were teenagers. Still other sailors reported being “hailed off” by their seniors, and that it was impossible to refuse a prostitution experience.

Such testimony goes far to reinforce the concept of Daniel Weltzer-Lang’s ‘maison-des-hommes’. Weltzer-Lang (2001) argues that in homosocial environments, such as on sailing ships, or in the military, the individual male must necessarily become sexually excited over images that portray women as sexual commodities. Weltzer-Lang believes that this concept accounts for the elevated frequency of prostitution use within homosocial environments. Contributing data to this argument, Sullivan and Simon (1998: 138) found that of the men that had formerly served in the military, 137 out of 382, or 35.9%, had paid for sex. Compared to the non-military sample, only 130 out of 1,028, or 12% had frequented a prostitute.

Weltzer-Lang’s concept, however, is but a default explanation. He does not explain why the particular portrayal of women as sexual commodities exists, only that in homosocial environments it is necessary to become aroused by them. Studies have shown that this “necessary” arousal does increase the proportion of men who use prostitutes within these environments. These studies do not demonstrate why the objectification of

women is actually a necessity, only that such an objectification exists under certain conditions where women are absent.

One must consider the notion that the commodification of women is a symptom of the socialization processes that occur in the military, or on sailing ships. The soldier in the military and the sailor in the merchant marine follow routines in which they are largely devoid of any power and control over themselves, let alone others. The elevated percentage of clients within these occupations may reflect a socialization process that teaches them that they can obtain power and control over prostituted women, and that this power is linked to their own sexual pleasure. The purchase of sex therefore, is a need associated with a lack of power and control, reinforced by the created link between sexual pleasure and power.

Contrary to Welter-Lang, there is no imaginary imperative regarding gatherings of exclusively male company. The acts of sailors and soldiers are not representations of "men at their most basic", which implies a relation between an instinctual male need for sex and the prostituted woman who so valiantly provides it. Welter-Lang would do well to apply his concept of "maison-des-hommes" to an order of all male monks, and compare the frequency with which they frequent prostitutes to that of the population at large. These monks, while popularly perceived as "not acting naturally", or "suppressing their instinct", are no less "natural" than the soldier or the sailor. The monks are simply exposed to a different ideology regarding pleasure and power.

The statement; "When men get together, women are inevitably portrayed as sex objects", is popular, appears to be supported by statistics, and yet is not a straightforward truth. Rather than concluding that gatherings of exclusively male company lead to the

objectification of women, it would appear that more research is needed surrounding the socialization processes involved in homosocial occupations such as the military and the navy.

#### ***4.9 Self-esteem and "Socio-Emotional" Problems***

It is important to keep Prieur and Taksdal's distinction between "occasional" and "frequent" clients in mind. In examining the possibility of emotional dissimilarities between clients and non-clients, frequent clients begin to appear as a potential subgroup. It is also important to keep in mind that Prieur and Taksdal conducted their survey exclusively on Norwegian clients. Only an estimated 13% of Norwegians have admitted to visiting a prostitute, which, in comparison to a country such as Thailand, is not very high. In Norway, being a frequent client might in itself be a source of emotional distress. This leads one to wonder if socio-emotional problems cause a man to purchase sex, or if socio-emotional problems are caused by a man's purchase of sex. The distinction is subtle, but important.

In the first case, a man with socio-emotional problems might purchase sex because he believes that the purchase of sex will somehow provide a cure for said emotional dysfunction. This would suggest that the man has a particular view of sex, more precisely paid sex, that equates it with socio-emotional stability. Whether this man's perception of sex as provider of socio-emotional stability is related to a perceived lack of pleasure/power on his part is unknown, but remains an area in need of further research.

In the second case, a man purchases sex repeatedly. Through repeated purchases of sex at some point he finds himself with socio-emotional problems. It is unclear whether these socio-emotional problems arise because of his self-realization that he is a "client", a stigmatized label in his own cultural reference, or because he finds that he is addicted to the "thrill" of purchasing sex and cannot stop, or because his stance towards women has been reshaped by his reliance upon impersonal sexual encounters, and this new stance is incompatible with prescribed notions of marriage and monogamy to which he is daily subjected. It is potentially a mixture of all these reasons, and possibly more.

One final thought to bear in mind is that it is interesting to notice a shift in Prieur and Taksdal's study. This shift portrays the frequent client outside of the socializing processes of homosocial occupations, as the real subject worthy of study. The occasional client is similar enough in all demographic aspects to the non-client as to be "normal". The frequent client within homosocial environments gains his excuse through theories that do little more than erect "boys will be boys" as an objective truth.

This suggests that all non-clients are not potential frequent clients, but are potential occasional clients, and potential frequent clients if they join the army, or other exclusively male occupation. Taken to its logical conclusion, Prieur and Taksdal subtly agree that occasionally purchasing sex is an acceptable expression of male sexuality, at least within Norway. Frequently purchasing sex in a homosocial environment is also an accepted expression. Relying on purchased sex outside of homosocial environments, on the other hand, is sexually deviant. One must then ask the question, to which Prieur and Taksdal do not opine an answer, what is the danger posed to society through a reliance on paid sex? Is paid sex a "treat" upon which one should not rely too heavily, like too much

sugar in one's diet? Do men risk upsetting the economic stability of the "monogamous" nuclear family if they buy too much sex? Should money be better spent on other commodities that involve more extended production, rather than on sex?

Understandably, Prieur and Taksdal do not provide the reader with an answer. Nor do they provide a quantitative definition of what is "frequent". It is to their utmost advantage not to provide the reader with a quantitative expression of the terms "occasional" or "frequent", indeed if such terms do exist. By keeping the terms "frequent" and "occasional" vague, they provide all purchasers of sex with an ideological escape hatch. Left to the individual, what buyer of sex, when faced with the stigma of the frequent client, or the normalcy of the occasional client, would self-identify himself with the negative label?

Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 107) found that single, "frequent", clients outside of homosocial environments were "not just accidentally single, they experienced certain difficulties in establishing lasting connections with women...(They were) marked by an air of distance, anxiety and incompetence in dealings with women." (Prieur & Taksdal 1993: 107). Also, while Prieur and Taksdal noted that frequent clients were not particularly physically deviant or ugly, there was a perceived lack of attractiveness on their part, which "undoubtedly has bearing on one's courage and ability to approach the opposite sex."

Within Monto's (2000: 78) sample, 29.2% of repeat users agreed to the statement "I have difficulty meeting women who are not nude dancers or prostitutes." as opposed to 14.0% of first time clients. 47.4% of repeat users agreed to the statement "I am shy and awkward when I am trying to meet a woman." as opposed to 32.9% of first time clients.

Sullivan and Simon (1998: 152) also noted that clients who were not within a homosocial environment were more likely to suffer from socio-emotional problems. Clients were more likely to report feelings of emotional and physical dissatisfaction with themselves, and were more likely to claim that they did not feel as wanted or satisfied with respect to sex. Clients were also more likely to claim that they did not have sex as an expression of love.

Xantidis (2000: 165) did not delineate client subgroups based on the amount of purchased sexual encounters. However, when measuring for "social-sexual effectiveness" Xantidis et al. noted that a subgroup of clients emerged that appeared to demonstrate a lack of comfort and confidence in dealing with women in dating and sexual situations. It appears as though Xantidis' findings also support the notion of a subgroup of clients that has difficulty in associating with non-prostitute women. Again, however, there is no suggestion as to whether these men purchase sex because of such difficulties, or whether such difficulties arise because of the fact that they purchase sex.

Prieur and Taksdal (1993: 107) note that for frequent or repeat clients, the act of purchasing sex has the potential to become an addiction, whose continued use acts as a negation against the establishment of constructive relationships with non-prostitute women. They argue that the purchase of sex may lead to a momentary assuagement of social pressures towards heterosexual coupling, in the sense that the client feels as though he is a "real man" because he is having sex. However, the continued purchase of sexual encounters may contribute to the acceptance of an ideology that equates women as commodities, and sexual pleasure as linked to only the amount of power and control that is obtainable in purchased sex.

One must entertain the possibility that the socio-emotional problems and increased number of partners often found among frequent clients is the result of an incompatibility between the client's ideological perceptions of sex, and those of the dominant ideology. The ideology of the frequent client, formed and reinforced through his sexual encounters with prostitutes, may not allow him to acquire sexual pleasure in encounters other than those based on financial transactions. Without the social reinforcement found in the army or aboard a sailing ship, this equation of pleasure with "purchased" power and control may lead to socio-emotional problems, and feelings of guilt.

Consider also that Roger Kern (2003) and Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) have based entire studies on clients upon client testimonies gathered through Internet postings on web boards dedicated exclusively to discussions surrounding the purchase of sex. The presence of these virtual communities, devoted to the exchange of stories and information regarding the sex one has purchased, might plausibly be attributed to the need of at least some clients to establish a surrogate homosocial atmosphere. This "virtual" homosocial environment might assuage their own problematic feelings regarding their habit of purchasing sex in light of relative social disapproval.

#### ***4.10 Sexual Conservatism***

O'Connell Davidson's (2003: 11) multi-national study found that clients were not prone to be any more sexually conservative than the general population. While measures of sexual conservatism varied between nations, studies conducted in Thailand, Japan, Sweden, and Denmark demonstrated that clients are as diverse as the general population

in terms of their sexual conservatism. Clients' statements concerning sexual conservatism appear to reflect, rather than differ from, the variances in sexual conservatism of the general population. Simply put, a client is no more likely than the national sample in which he is located to endorse statements regarding sexual conservatism.

#### ***4.11 Client Demographics: Conclusion***

The aim of this chapter was to attempt to isolate meaningful variations between clients and non-clients, in order to discern whether certain demographic characteristics led men to be more apt to purchase sex. The purchase of sex, as has been discussed, may be linked to a desire for sexual power/pleasure that is otherwise unattainable with an unpaid sexual partner, and is also potentially a means of establishing rank among male hegemonic sub-groups. Therefore, the questions become: Do certain demographic characteristics lead men to perceive of, and choose, purchased sex as an expression of sexual power/pleasure? And, are certain demographically identifiable sub-groups of men more likely to perceive of, and choose, purchased sex as a means of establishing rank and hierarchy?

Unfortunately, the few studies concerning clients of prostitution present conflicting findings, from which definite conclusions cannot be drawn. While some studies suggest that power-related demographic characteristics such as age, racial and ethnic status, family history, occupation and education are related to increased levels of client behavior, they are contradicted by the findings of other studies, and in certain cases, by themselves.

For example, Sullivan and Sullivan found that men at both extremes of the education spectrum were more prone to report that they had purchased sex than were those men with an average amount of education. While one might associate the elevated propensity of men with little education to purchase sex with a desire for an otherwise unobtainable measure of power and control, the same conclusion cannot be drawn for men with elevated levels of education, for whom a measure of power and control is assumedly socially assured.

As well, one cannot simply link increased levels of client behavior to demographic deficiencies in power and control in light of the frequent occurrence of "high-profile" arrests of decidedly powerful men in their attempts to purchase sex. It would appear, in light of the press generated each time a man of high social standing is caught attempting to purchase sex, that these men represent the minority among their power strata. However, no clear conclusions can be drawn. At this juncture, the most one can conclude is that the propensity to purchase sex is not limited to demographic "power minorities".

However, one need not do away with the link between the purchase of sex and the association of one's sexual pleasure with power and control simply because demographic representations are not conclusive. Instead, one might surmise that a man need not experience an actual deficiency in his own power and control in order to associate his own sexual pleasure with the acquisition of power and control. This association of sexual pleasure with power and control is not limited to "power minority" groups, and appears to affect men from the dominant "power majority" as well. Men who lack power and control seek it out however they may acquire it. Men who have power and control seek to

retain it, and one means of demonstrating said power and control is feasibly through the purchase of another individual for sexual pleasure.

One must also consider the notion of hegemonic masculinity as a factor that has the potential to transcend demographic boundaries more traditionally associated with power and control, or a lack thereof. One's membership within a hegemonic male group, the importance one places upon one's membership in said group, and the values of said group vis-à-vis masculinity and the purchase of sex are all potential influences that do not necessarily coincide with readily identifiable demographic factors. However, as demonstrated through the highly increased levels of client behavior among men in particular homosocial occupations such as sailor or soldier, the importance of the influence of hegemonic masculinity upon rates of client behavior must not be, as it has been largely to this point, overlooked.

Also in need of further study is the possibility of a link between client behavior and of status through conspicuous consumption. Just as one man might be more likely to purchase sex if the hegemonic community to which he associates himself links the purchase of sex with the reinforcement of the group ideology vis-à-vis sex, or women in general, so might another be more likely to purchase sex if the community to which he associates himself links the purchase of sex with the reinforcement of status through consumption. It is not known at this point if certain men are more susceptible to an ideology that does not differentiate between non-purchased sex and purchased sex, in that both are commodities to be consumed. It is also not known whether or not acceptance of this ideology implies membership in a particular hegemonic male community, or

whether it is a symptom of a larger social acceptance of sex, and women, as commodities to be consumed, and of prostituted women as salespeople providing a service.

It is clear that a great deal more research surrounding the demographics of clients, and the existence, and configuration, of hegemonic male communities is needed. Further research could potentially demonstrate whether indeed there are demographic dissimilarities between clients and non-clients. At this point in the development of client-related research it is difficult to determine if conflicting data surrounding client demographics is truly the result of no meaningful variations between clients and non-clients, or whether it is potentially due to other factors, such as differences in research methods. Also unexplored, but of great interest, is the presence of high-profile clients, men with a great deal of power and control who chose to purchase sex in light of the fact that they are not members of any demographic minority.

Further research into hegemonic masculine groups, their ideologies, and the composition of their memberships is of equal importance. These include both hegemonic masculine groups in the strictest sense, such as the military or a sailing ship, but also the potential of a larger, less easily defined hegemonic masculinity that associates male status with the consumption of sex, and of women.

## 5. Client Motivation: Why Do Men Purchase Sex?

The previous chapter concentrated on examining the demographic data revealed by studies on clients of prostitution. Such an examination is useful because it establishes an approximate picture of which men are more likely to purchase sex. From this rough image, one can attempt to isolate various commonalities between those demographic groups that appear to be overly represented among clients. The following chapter focuses on compiling information from the various studies that have dealt with the self-professed motivations that clients give for purchasing sex. The aim of this compilation is to compare the testimonies of clients against the information gathered surrounding client demographics, in the hopes that clients testimonies will categorize themselves under the wide-sweeping theoretical motivations discussed in the first and second chapters. To recap, these theoretical motivations include; a link between pleasure, power, and control; and, the establishment of rank within a male hegemony. The most straightforward way to carry out this examination is to construct general headings that encapsulate the findings of the existent studies.

### 5.1 *The Prostitute as "Whore"*.

In 1998, Julia O'Connell Davidson published the book *Prostitution, Power and Freedom*. This book contained a study on client motivations to purchase sex. O'Connell Davidson's data was drawn from a non-random sample of European and American heterosexual male clients of prostitutes. O'Connell Davidson began her investigation with the underlying assumption that the motivations to seek purchased sex are not the same motivations that cause men to seek non-purchased sex.

The first motivation that O'Connell Davidson (1998: 140) identified in her research was the propensity of some clients to claim that they became aroused by the idea of the prostituted woman as a 'whore'. In his analysis of Swedish studies on clients, Sven-Axel Månsson (2003) also supports this motivational category among clients. The idea that the prostituted woman represented a woman who was available to the public, and dealt with sex in an instrumental, impersonal manner, appeared to make prostituted women meaningfully different than non-prostituted women in the eyes of some clients. The apparent difference between prostituted women and non-prostituted women is then sufficiently eroticized as to present a motivation for some clients to purchase sex.

It is important to note, at the onset of this examination, that the motivation to visit a prostituted woman because the image one has of her as whore is not related to a claim by clients that they feel motivated to purchase sex for the mechanical process of sex itself. The motivation to purchase sex with a whore entails that the client values the fantasy aspect of the purchase to a greater degree than he does the desire to simply ejaculate. This suggests that either the client is primarily motivated to purchase sex for reasons other than his own sexual pleasure, or that the client's sexual pleasure, in terms of his desire to ejaculate, is secondary to the desire to debase and control the prostituted woman. The desire for sex with a "whore" is the first among many to be explored in this chapter, of a male motivation to purchase sex so that they might treat the prostituted women in a particular way.

Månsson notes that in a 1962 study on clients, Charles Winick observed that the reason clients emphasized non-sexual motivations was because "emotional meanings and

overtones in visiting a prostitute are much more salient for the man than a desire for a sexual experience.”

At the onset, it is vitally important to note that the client is the sole constructor of the scenario, and implicit in this is that the client is the one who gives the prostituted woman her role. Regardless of the role he ascribes to her, be it whore, dominatrix, saint, one cannot ignore the fact that the prostituted woman for him is a body whom he has paid to control, and paid to define. Whatever the client desires to treat the prostituted woman as, the utter lack of input on the part of the prostituted woman speaks to the client’s sexual pleasure arising from his complete power and control during the encounter.

### **5.2 Whore = Hostility?**

O’Connell Davidson (1998: 141) identified “several [potential] layers of hostility present in the eroticization of the ‘dirty whore’.” This suggests that clients who are motivated to purchase sex from a prostitute because they perceive her to be a ‘whore’ also possess anger and hostility towards her. The first theoretical ‘layer’ of hostility applies to clients for whom the psychological construction of the prostituted woman as ‘whore’ gives freedom to carry out impulses to debase women. Perceiving the prostituted woman as fundamentally different than non-prostituted women liberates themselves from the guilt to which such an impulse might otherwise link itself. The prostitute as ‘whore’ is therefore perceived as being sufficiently dissimilar from a non-prostitute to allow the client to “transgress yet remain a moral innocent.”

Is the client’s hostility towards the prostituted woman due to the fact that her presence dishonours all men, or women? Or perhaps the client’s hostility towards the

prostituted woman is due to the fact that he has surrendered to his own sex drive (or more succinctly, the socially created pressures for him to have sex), which has cost him money. He sees the prostitute as the cause of his weakness, and treats her thusly.

When the client is motivated by the idea of the prostituted woman as 'whore', does he possess a higher level of hostility towards women who act in a "dishonourable" manner? Or, is he motivated to purchase sex with the prostituted woman, whose character he already knows to be morally repugnant to him, in order to punish her with his sex? Or, on the other hand, is the client who claims to be motivated by the idea of the 'whore' in need of moral justification to soothe a conscience troubled by the fact that he has transgressed against his own perception of how a man (himself) is supposed to treat women? There is no answer forthcoming in this thesis, but clearly the desire for sex with a "whore" is itself a complex and multi-faceted motivation. One cannot, at this juncture, accept the argument that the prostituted woman is any different from all women. Thusly, the client's characterization of her as something different than all women reflects the fact that his sexual pleasure is linked to his desire to treat a woman in a particular manner. There can be no justification in the argument that the prostituted woman's sexual constitution is in any way different than any other woman's.

### ***5.3 The Prostitute as Business Transaction***

In 2001, Elizabeth Bernstein published a study of prostitute/client relations. Her study was based on in-depth interviews with 15 male clients, interviews with 40 prostituted men and women, and ethnographic fieldwork in sexual markets carried out in six Northern California and Western European cities over the course of 5 years. Bernstein

(2001: 399) found that many of her clients indicated an “explicitly stated *preference* for...bounded intimate relationships over other relationship forms.”

Bernstein (2001: 400-401) attributes this preference for contractual intimacy to a shift in the perceived role of the social man. Whereas once (no specific date for this shift is provided) man subscribed to the “family-based ‘good provider role’”, the “unfettered, consumeristic ‘Playboy philosophy’” has of late taken precedence. This suggests that the role of conspicuous consumer has permeated men’s perceptions of their own sexuality. The purchase of sex, whether it is an affirmation of one’s social role (as are all purchases?), or whether it is an affirmation of one’s own sexuality (as are all sexual encounters?), is unimportant. The end result is that sex, and by sex is meant *all* sex, is imbued with the consumer ideology, and the act of purchasing sex from a prostituted woman has come to represent a socially accepted definition of masculinity.

When *all* sex is a financial transaction, and all prostituted women are salespeople, all women become prostituted women. Wives or girlfriends are simply prostituted women who accept indirect payment for sex, and then may or may not renege on providing sex. As Campbell (1998: 166) notes, the professional prostituted woman, on the other hand, is always available. She is the most capable, trustworthy, saleswoman of sex, a commodity like any other. As Plummer (1997: 172) notes:

[Clients preferred] the commercial rule of payment of money to the rules of social life in which they perceived various other forms of payment were demanded, much weightier than the sums of money involved in commercial sex. Although they insisted on continuing to gloss their contact with prostitutes in relationship terms, the men expressed confidence that payment of money for sex entitled them to freedom from the requirements normally associated with relationships.

These findings demonstrate that some clients have no problem perceiving sex as a commodity. For these clients, sex with a 'real' prostituted woman becomes the most honest and straightforward sexual transaction available. As Jordan (1997: 64) argues:

The opinions of the clients suggested that men in our society are used to paying for sex. They can date women hoping that this will be the outcome, marry them to secure themselves a sexual partner or buy them for variety or in the absence of other options.

Like Plummer, Månsson (2003) argues that clients who claim to be motivated to purchase sex because of the straightforward, business-like simplicity of the transaction are a product of the capitalist society in which they live. As Månsson argues:

[Commodified sex is a result of] late modern society's mass-produced images of sexuality in pornography, advertisement and TV-talk shows...All is understood as possible, not least in the area of sexuality. Such expectations also provide fertile soil for prostitution...Within prostitution the possibilities seem to be endless - as long as the customer is willing to pay...Sex is viewed primarily as a bodily need demanding attention at regular intervals, a sort of recurrent "cleaning of the pipes".

Consider the following client testimonies gathered by Jacqueline Bailey (2002), who gathered interviews in an Australian brothel:

I can assure you this is a damn sight cheaper than wining and dining a woman, like people usually do...I would have to spend hours on all the bullshit you have to talk. It would cost me \$100 for the meal and then, if I am lucky, I would finally get what I wanted in the beginning...This is good value. It's neat and tidy. You walk out the door and you're free. Guy, 52, Lawyer (2002: 3).

Here I know that, within reason, there won't be any problem. That's the thing about paying the money, you're the boss. The customer is always right. Angelo, 23, Computer Programmer (2002: 8).

Just socializing is a waste of time. You get knock-backs. You try to chat someone up, spend money all night, and then they go home and leave you high and dry. I'm sick of that happening. Some women are bitches, actually most of them are. I don't have a very high opinion of them, really. They lead blokes on. It's very frustrating out there you know. Spiro, 36, Public Servant (2002: 74).

Prieur and Taksdal caution that clients who commodify sex must not be considered as conscientious consumers searching for the best value for their money.

Prieur and Taksdal argue that this type of client is actually driven to buy sex “out of fear of losing themselves in a relation with an equal partner.”

Prieur and Taksdal (1993) label this client the “*cheater*”. He expects the prostitute to demonstrate all aspects of emotionality and mutuality within the sexual encounter, while ensuring that he himself, through payment, need not reciprocate. Prieur and Taksdal introduce the suggestion that the client is not motivated to purchase sex because of the simplicity of the transaction in a world in which all sex is commodified. Instead, they warn that the client is primarily motivated to purchase sex because of the fact that he can bypass the emotional reciprocity that defines unpaid, consensual sex.

This suggests that even if the society in question is driven by the ideology of conspicuous consumption, there remains a fundamental difference between paid sex from a prostituted woman, and unpaid sex from a willing partner. Not only can the client purchase a bypass from his own emotional investment, he can also purchase, as will be explored, a particular emotional response from the prostituted woman. In some cases, clients testify that the purchase of emotion is their principle motivation in choosing to purchase sex.

#### ***5.4 The Prostitute as Emotional Outlet***

When sex is absorbed by the rubric of conspicuous consumption, all sex is purchased sex. Rather than viewing the prostituted woman as something fundamentally different from other women (such as a whore), the prostituted woman’s apparent attraction is her similarity to other women, and her subsequent availability. Treated as

any other willing sexual partner might be treated, the client comes to expect the prostitute to display mutual enjoyment and affection, as he would expect from a free and willing partner. It is of little surprise then, that some clients claim to be motivated to purchase sex because of the emotional aspect expected to be contained within the encounter (Bailey 2002, Kern 2003, Plummer 1997: 176, Månsson 2003 Campbell 1998: 164). Not only is the prostituted woman expected to provide sex (it is debatable how secondary her role as provider of sex is), she is expected to demonstrate sexual enjoyment and emotional support.

As Plummer (1997: 173-175) notes, the demands of clients appear paradoxical. The client enjoys the freedom and ease with which sex can be bought from a prostituted woman. The client does not want an emotional or mutual relationship with the prostituted woman. On the other hand, these same clients come to expect that purchased sex will contain sexual reciprocity and mutuality. As Plummer notes:

At one level the men wanted to see a high level of social reciprocity in commercial sex. Men wanted the myth of social warmth sustained from the moment of entering a parlor....The men argued that paid sex was not just social contact, it was represented as emotional...By some it was depicted as a primary emotional relationship...Men represented themselves as not interested in mere superficial sexual contacts, in what might be called 'casual sex'.

Consider the following client testimonies gathered by Bailey (2002):

They can't have pleasure from every man they see, anyway. But with me, yes, they do. I know because you can see if they have pleasure or not. It shows that they enjoy themselves with me. Dominic, 39, Builder (2002: 79-80).

I suppose if she didn't show some sort of enjoyment, I'd probably be dissatisfied. Lee, 25, Supermarket Manager (2002: 60).

It would be nice to spend longer cuddling someone, but I can't afford that. I've got used to missing it, the warmth, although I wonder if you ever get used to such a great loss. Jim, 76, Aged Pensioner (2002: 62).

Plummer (1997: 177-178) notes that even when presented with contrary evidence, these clients maintained their convictions that *they* were somehow different. As Plummer notes:

The men remained confident that sexual pleasure was generally a mutually satisfactory affair. Without any sense of misgiving, contradiction or sleight of hand, these men were able either to do without evidence, or to dismiss evidence of the real agency of the women whom they paid for sex, and to construct for them pleasures and desires which were consistent with and ratified their own. They drew on elements of the 'permissive' discourse in rejecting commitments, but on elements of the 'have/hold' discourse in arguments about emotional connection. Worked in this way, apparently contradictory elements of discourse provide a very strong justificatory interpretive schema...It is undoubtedly a self-serving interpretive schema leaving men who pay for sex free to enjoy it on their terms and insulating them from evidence which contradicts the premise of that pleasure.

O'Connell Davidson argues that the client's desire for displays of emotionality and mutuality on the part of the prostituted woman are not related to his need for emotional support or self-justification as a lover or as a 'man'. Instead, O'Connell Davidson (1998: 160) suggests that these desires are linked to a need to "control the person of the prostitute, rather than simply to buy her services as a paid actor." In short, the desire to make the prostitute achieve a sexual climax is linked to the need of these clients to see the prostitute lose control of not only her professional role, but of herself.

Jordan (1997: 65) notes that the difference between 'meeting' a woman, and having sex with a woman, is ignored. As Jordan argues, the clients' equation of sex with emotionality is indicative of the belief that the emotional and mutual aspects of sex are for sale:

Women are conceptualized as necessary to fulfil men's sexual needs, but often in these accounts they emerge also as the providers of men's emotional needs as well. The men frequently spoke of going to sex workers to meet their intimacy, as if the only way they knew how to be close to someone was to have sex with them...Often it seemed that sexual solutions were being sought to essentially emotional problems.

For her part, O'Connell Davidson (1998: 152) argues that presenting the prostitute as a 'comforter' or sexual 'healer' allows these clients to create a 'permissive narrative' that is founded on sexist principles. In her research, O'Connell Davidson found that these clients justify their purchases of sex by telling themselves that they are not driven by sexual desire, but that instead they are seeking care, conversation, and tenderness. The sex itself is of a much lesser importance. O'Connell Davidson argues that these justifications are weak, and that behind these rationalizations "are sexual scripts which have as much to do with vengeance and control as those enacted by any other client."

O'Connell Davidson argues that notions of control are present in these clients' rationalizations. They perceive their own sexual desires as 'natural', and that their state of emotional dysfunction has been created by non-prostitute women who have wrongly exercised their "power to grant and withhold access to their bodies". The prostitute, therefore, is not chosen firstly as an emotional provider, and secondly as a source of sex. Instead, she is chosen as a sexual partner whose submission is guaranteed. Any emotional benefits to the client are acquired but through the grace of the prostitute's false depiction of enjoyment. The motivation to purchase sex therefore, is not for emotionality, but for a guarantee of acceptance. The prostituted woman is selected as a sexual partner because there is no risk of her *not* providing emotionality. This is paramount to a desire for complete power and control within the sexual encounter.

As Plummer (1997: 178) argues, the level of control demanded by this type of client is potentially greater than by those clients who openly acknowledge that they are motivated by the pleasure they derive from "force and coercion." Clients who understand that they use their superior economic position to purchase the sexual services of a

relatively unwilling woman demand less control of this woman than do clients who expect, or who even believe, that the prostitute is a willing, eager, and equal sexual partner.

### ***5.5 The Prostitute as Source of "Different" Sex***

Månsson (2003) notes that men frequently state that they are motivated to purchase sex because the prostitute is willing to perform sexual acts that their wives or steady partners will not. Numerous clients attest to the fact that they purchase sex because it is the only type of sexual encounter in which they can fulfill their motivation to take on a "different and more passive sexual role". According to Martha Stein's 1974 (in Månsson 2003) study of client behavior with call girls, her respondents claimed that about half of the clients assumed a passive position with the prostitute, and made the prostituted woman lead the encounter.

Concurrent with Stein's study, O'Connell Davidson (1998: 148) found that some of her client sample responded that they were motivated to purchase sex because they were "aroused by the idea of sexual contact with a dominant and sexually powerful woman." O'Connell Davidson notes that the most blatant expression of this particular client motivation is the preponderance of the commercial dominatrix. To a lesser degree, this motivation presents itself any time a client pays a prostitute to take control of the sexual encounter.

Consider these client testimonies gathered by Bailey (2002):

I have seen things on those video tapes where a guy is handcuffed behind his back and has a gag over his face while a lady puts her foot on his head...I'd like them to do that to me. I couldn't ask anyone else, I'd be too frightened of what they'd do to me. Ralph, 38, Factory Worker (2002: 31).

I like the idea of a woman taking charge of a situation and controlling it so that we both get the ultimate satisfaction of an orgasm. It's very important for me that the woman is getting as much pleasure as I am...With this scene, I know she wants it because she is dictating the terms. Kevin, 43, Business Manager (2002: 27).

Månsson (2003) argues that clients who seek purchased sex as a refuge from a world that demands men to be dominant at all times is but an idyllic attempt to veil the true nature of the prostitute/client encounter. While some clients may appear to act out submissive roles when they pay for sex, the clients' simulation of submission is not indicative of any real release of power and control to the prostituted woman. Whatever sexual scenario is constructed, it is constructed singularly by, and for, the client. The client is the director, and star, of his own sexual fantasy. In this sense, the client is never submissive, and is always in control of the situation regardless of the sexual position he assumes during the encounter.

O'Connell Davidson (1998: 150) notes that the client always controls the prostituted woman's movements, and that the client is singularly concerned with his own sexual satisfaction. The prostituted woman, while potentially playing a dominant role in the client's fantasy, has no power or value to the client except as a female body willing to be directed for money. O'Connell Davidson argues that far from being dominated by the prostituted woman, "the client dehumanizes her, and refuses to recognize her as anything more than her body and her sexual agency."

O'Connell Davidson also notes that the argument that clients are motivated to seek out prostituted individuals because they will perform sexual acts that they cannot obtain elsewhere is fictitious. There are non-prostituted individuals whose sexual preferences cover the gamut of conceivable sexual fantasies. Bear in mind the argument

raised by Joe Parker (2004) which is that there is an abundance of heterosexual, non-prostituted, women potentially available for sexual relationships.

*The one sexual scenario that the non-prostituted woman cannot fulfill for the client, however, is the complete and utter control he acquires through purchased sex. The motivation for purchasing sex, therefore, is, in this case, nothing more than the motivation for complete dominance of the sexual encounter. The client is motivated to purchase sex as a means of obtaining “different” sex, but the “difference” that the client seeks is complete control of the sexual encounter, not a release from his ‘unasked for’ position of social dominance.*

### **5.6 The Prostitute as Exotic**

Some clients, especially sex tourists, claim that they are motivated to purchase sex because foreign prostituted women possess exotic sexual qualities linked to her race or ethnicity. Månsson (2003) argues that the ascription of exotic characteristics to foreign-born prostituted women is due to an extension of equal rights to women in Europe and North America, and a perceived loss of dominance among men. In an attempt to reassert their dominant status, these clients take trips abroad, or seek out immigrant prostituted women to whom they ascribe images of ‘true’ and ‘natural’ femininity.

This discourse is smothered in images of submissive Asians, wild Africans and Eastern Europeans, and ‘free and easy’ Latin Americans (Marttila 2003, Månsson 1995 from Månsson 2003). O’Connell Davidson (2003: 18) argues that the real motivation of clients who seek foreign women is for a greater amount of sexual control than could

possibly be obtained with a non-foreign prostituted woman, let alone a non-prostituted woman.

O'Connell Davidson's 2003 study shows that a large number of clients are of the opinion that they can receive more 'value' for their money when sex is bought from a migrant prostituted woman. Clients perceive that this value is added to the purchase because migrant prostituted women are often less expensive, and more malleable, than local women. This would suggest that these clients consciously recognize that migrant prostituted women are in a more financially desperate situation, and their sexual pleasure is thus heightened by the knowledge that these women will therefore be more submissive to their control. Perhaps for their own moral placation, these clients then attribute the prostituted woman's submission as being brought about by the prostituted woman's own racial or ethnic heritage, rather than being a symptom of extreme financial need.

Consider the following testimonies from Indian clients, who appear to at least speak honestly about why they are motivated to purchase sex from migrant prostituted women, as gathered by O'Connell Davidson (2003):

It's easier to control women who come from the outside. Those who are still fresh in the trade can also be controlled. Indian bank clerk, married, aged 54 (2003: 22).

[Nepali girls] are especially nice when they are new to the area. They don't talk too much and are more helpful to the client. You can control them. Indian businessman, aged 21 (2003: 22).

Actually, they have no-one to turn to except their clients. So many women who come from other countries get their human warmth from clients. Indian brick kiln owner, married, aged 48 (2003: 22).

Finally, the fact that these clients are motivated to meet only *prostituted* women of different race or ethnicity suggests that they are not primarily interested in

the different sexual qualities that women of different ethnic or racial backgrounds might possess. Instead, their sexual pleasure lies in the amount of control that a sexual relationship with a minority prostituted woman entails. Reconsider O'Connell Davidson and Parker's argument that there are an abundance of potential female sexual partners, including those of various races and ethnicity, who are not prostituted. The fact that these clients are motivated to meet only prostituted women of different racial or ethnic backgrounds than their own, suggests that they are driven solely by the desire for domination.

### ***5.7 The Prostitute as Source of Risk***

O'Connell Davidson (1998: 154-156) notes that some of the clients in her sample were motivated to pay for sex because of the "real or imaginary" risks associated with the act. The risks, according to O'Connell Davidson, are generated because the act of paying for sex is, in some societies, a transgression against societal morals. Living the secret life of a client, or lying to one's unsuspecting partner about one's whereabouts appears to provide these men with the excitement of potential discovery and the fantasy that they are deviant. Some clients claim that this excitement and risk of discovery "heightens their sexual pleasure", while others find enjoyment in the perceived power they obtain by successfully lying about their actions to concerned individuals. O'Connell Davidson argues that lying and keeping secrets is an effective way of manipulating others, and is a medium of control. Creating a secretive life and controlling the perceptions of others is a means to gain a measure of control, and establish a particular type of power.

To eliminate the motivation of risk, Weltzer-Lang (2002) argues that prostituted women should be socially de-stigmatized. According to Weltzer-Lang, de-stigmatizing prostituted women through legalization measures will lessen the amount of “real” risk involved in the encounter, and hence will reduce the number of clients. As Weltzer-Lang contends:

Moins on stigmatisera les prostitué(e)s, moins il y aura de clients. Le système se nourrit de la relégation des prostitué(e)s : les clients ont besoin d'être dans un monde caché, extérieur à leur vie quotidienne. Intégrer [les personnes prostituées] dans la société en instaurant une concertation officielle permettrait de culpabiliser plus efficacement les clients.

This argument is problematic because not all clients react in the same way to the idea of risk. Granted, de-stigmatizing the prostitute through legalization, or relaxation of laws, might reduce the desire of those clients motivated by risk. On the other hand, there are potentially a great deal of men who have not purchased sex *because* of the potential risk involved. Welzer-Lang's hypothesis that legalization reduces both physical and social risks has not been proven. To further contend that legalization will reduce the number of clients is to overlook the entire compilation of data concerning client motivations for purchasing sex. As Janice Raymond (2003) writes:

Legalization/decriminalization of prostitution increases demand for prostitution...(it) boosts the motivation of men to buy women for sex in a wider and more permissible range of socially acceptable settings...With the advent of legalization in countries that have decriminalized sex industry, many men who would not risk buying women for sex now see prostitution as acceptable...When legal barriers disappear, so too do social and ethical barriers to treating women as sexual commodities...The legalization of prostitution sends the message to new generations of men and boys that women are sexual commodities and prostitution is harmless fun.

To argue for the de-stigmatization of prostitution because *some* men are motivated to purchase sex because of the risk involved is to overlook the fact that most clients do not include “risk” among their mentioned motivations. De-stigmatizing the

prostituted, through legalization, also does not address the fundamental differences in power and control between the prostituted woman and the client. In fact, one might contend that *legalizing prostitution is nothing more than a socially-endorsed acceptance of the imbalances of power and control between male and female, and more importantly, between the prostituted and the client.*

### **5.8 The Prostitute as Remedy for Sexual Urges**

A majority of clients stated that they were motivated to purchase sex because of sexual urges. Campbell (1998: 165) notes that the clients whom she interviewed described their desires for sex as an “overwhelming urge that had to be satisfied.” These same men also shared the conviction that in light of the fact that no non-prostituted women were readily available, the act of purchasing sex was a “reasonable, normal expression of male sexuality.” Marttila (2003) gathered similar responses from her client sample.

Consider the following client testimonies gathered by Bailey (2002):

You know, males have their sexual needs and this just takes care of them. Guy, 52, Lawyer (2002: 1)...I think it's just part of nature. Men are more highly sexed than women...If you don't have sex for awhile you sort of blow up. Ian, 30, Factory Worker (2002: 57)...Women know they have power over us because our urges and needs are stronger than theirs. Spiro, 36, Public Servant (2002: 75).

O'Connell Davidson (1998: 143) notes that the contention of the “male drive” allows the client perceive of the prostituted woman as a ‘good’ or ‘commodity’ “which satisfies a perfectly reasonable demand on the part of the ‘consumer’.” Sex for men becomes a necessity such as food, shelter, or water. Anne-Marie Marttila (2003) also notes that the contention of the “male drive” lends legitimacy to the prostitution industry.

If one can present sex for men as a commodity, and a necessary one at that, then by default the prostitution industry becomes the justifiable provider of this service. As noted by Anne-Marie Marttila:

An important element of the sex industry is, as pointed out by Hearn and Jyrkinen (2000, 69), the creation and maintaining of clientele of the sex trade. To make the sex business profitable, it also has to be generally considered as acceptable a business as possible. It has to be normalized and legitimized...The needs of clients are socially constructed...Categories of man and woman are essentialized and naturalized: masculine sexuality is presented as uncontrollable and instinctual which inevitably requires satisfaction...The naturalization of genders is well rooted in society...Therefore, there are no difficulties in creating and sustaining the demand for commercial sex.

As demonstrated in the first chapter, however, sexuality is nothing more than a construct that serves to justify a particular division of power between the sexes. To claim to be motivated to purchase sex because of one's "male drive" is to subscribe to the notion that there is an inalienable, biological, truth to the inequalities of power between the sexes. This is not to say that the desires for sex are not real. One must however, question the origins of these desires. To assume that this desire must be satiated immediately by women whose sole purpose is to service men is to subscribe to the notion that men's sexual desires take precedence over the freedom of choice of women.

### ***5.9 Client Motivation: Conclusion***

It would appear that all self-professed motivations for purchasing sex can be reduced to one of two fundamental motives. The first is a link between sexual pleasure and unequal power and control. The second is a desire to establish rank within a male hegemony. The link between sexual pleasure and power and control is, as elaborated upon in the first chapter of this thesis, a link whose origins are social. Male hegemony,

and in particular ways in which to establish rank, are also social constructions. This suggests that the motivation to purchase sex is a social phenomenon.

It is unfortunate that, at this stage in the maturity of client-related research, no study has successfully managed to merge information concerning client demographics with findings on client motivations. It is impossible, therefore, to know if any demographic group is more liable to subscribe to a particular motivation to purchase sex. Knowing this would enable researchers to understand the effects of particular social pressures to purchase sex upon different demographic groups. This could potentially assist “John schools”, and other institutions whose agenda is the treatment of clients, to “customize” their education campaigns.



## 6. Conclusion

This thesis was founded upon two hypotheses. The first hypothesis was that the desire for purchased sex is not synonymous with the desire for non-purchased sex. This hypothesis can be both confirmed and disproved. In attempting to validate this hypothesis, this thesis explored *what* is desired by clients when they chose to purchase sex. What was found was that clients purchase sex for a variety of reasons, and that not *all* of these motivations can be easily separated from a desire for *any* sex, be it purchased or otherwise.

One of the most frequently occurring motivations to purchase sex can be reduced to a client's link between sexual pleasure and power and control. In such cases, it is plausible to conclude that men purchase sex because the amount of power and control, and hence sexual pleasure, one obtains through purchased sex is otherwise unobtainable. When a client chooses to purchase sex because he finds the power he has over the prostituted woman is sexually pleasurable, one can surmise that for these clients there exists a fundamental difference between non-purchased and purchased sex. In these cases, the client's sexual pleasure comes primarily from the purchase, and the power intrinsic to the purchase.

However, in researching client motivations and demographics, it became clear that not *all* client motivations are based upon a desire for an otherwise unobtainable measure of power and control. It appears that a significant portion of clients are motivated to purchase sex because "having sex" brings with it a particular significance vis-à-vis their male hegemonic group. For these clients, the motivation to purchase sex would appear to be no different than the motivation to have sex. In these cases, the

difference between non-purchased sex and purchased sex is less clear, because their definition of sex makes no difference between purchased and non-purchased sex, or between the prostituted woman and the non-prostituted woman. The decision to purchase sex may not be related to sexual pleasure from power and control, and may be more related to ease and availability.

Consider the example of a sailing crew who disembarks at a port of call. The sailors who purchase sex from prostituted women claims to do so out of a desire to “fit in”. The sailor gains rank through purchasing sex, either by simply having sex, or by demonstrating his accordance with the dominant attitude vis-à-vis women, and the sexual act in general. The impetus for these clients is to have sex, because the act of having sex is for them imbued with a means to obtain social rank within their male hegemonic group.

However, in light of the fact that the association between sex and rank is a social construct, this association can be severed. Indeed, this association is non-existent among countless other male hegemonic communities, where purchased sex is not considered to be synonymous with non-purchased sex, and where sex itself is not a means of obtaining social rank.

The second hypothesis of this thesis was that the phenomenon of prostitution is nor a social constant across time and culture, and was instead the result of a particular social ideology. This hypothesis posited that the two ideological necessities for prostitution to exist were: an acceptance of social inequalities based on sex, and the existence of a developed market economy. Through the concrete examples provided by

Brownmiller and others, and through the theoretical discussion surrounding sexuality and sexual fantasy in the first chapter, this hypothesis was proven correct.

Brownmiller and Malinowski provided examples of societies where aggression towards women, most notably in the form of rape, did not occur. From Marcuse, one can argue that because prostitution has not existed in all societies, and because the client/prostituted relationship focuses on genital contact and male ejaculation, the pleasure derived from purchased sex is a strictly social pleasure. It is by no means linked to an underlying "pleasure principle". While Marcuse argued that there was an underlying sexual instinct, purchasing sex was by no means an exhibition of this instinct.

From Foucault, one can plausibly argue that the study of sexuality is not actually a search for knowledge but is instead a means of justifying a particular imbalance of power and control between the sexes. The justification for the existence of the prostitution industry, in that it satiates the male sexual drive, is not founded in "truth", but is instead the same justification given for the subordination of women to men.

The sexual is an area in which power and control are easily exchanged, and the notion of sexuality is merely a socially created justification for imbalances of power between the sexes to be expressed sexually. One must look at the relations of power and control that are expressed sexually between the client and prostituted woman. The client "buys", the prostituted woman is "bought". The client "acts", the prostituted woman is "acted upon". The client "consumes", the prostituted woman is "consumed". Attempting to justify the inequalities of power between the client and prostituted woman through recourse to the concept of sexuality is equivalent to attempting to justify the social inequalities that allow the client/prostituted dichotomy to transpire.

From Barry, one can argue that the sexual fantasy that equates the purchase of sex with sexual pleasure exists only because it is suggested, and endorsed, in the social. Barry would argue that the link between sexual pleasure and the purchase of sex from a prostituted woman is a socially constructed link, as is, for that matter, the link between sexual pleasure and power and control. The existence of these links is not haphazard. Rather, the links between sexual pleasure and female commodification, and sexual pleasure and male power and control, exist because they reinforce the unequal social dynamics of power between men and women.

Within a patriarchal capitalist society, there can be no link between sexual pleasure for women and the purchase of sex from a man. Such a fantasy does not reinforce the ideological presentation of men as having more intrinsic value than commodities, nor does it align itself with imbalances of power and control between men and women. Conversely, Barry would argue that the link between male sexual pleasure and purchasing sex could not exist in a society where women had an equal, or greater, measure of the balance of power and control between the sexes. In these cases, the link between male sexual pleasure and the presentation of women as sexual commodities to be bought and sold would be incongruous with women's position within society. Women would not be in a position to be commodified, nor would men link sexual pleasure to such a commodification.

Using the theoretical link between male sexual pleasure and the purchase of sex allows the researcher to perceive of clients as individuals who subscribe to a particular ideology vis-à-vis their own sex, rather than as men simply being sexually expressive. Also, knowing that men claim different motivations to purchase sex, and that clients

represent a varying percentage of the total population, it is possible to conclude that there are different ideologies surrounding sex, only some of which support the purchase sex. One can then potentially begin to link particular ideologies that endorse the purchase of sex with hypothetical demographic groups.

Unfortunately, as noted, there is a dearth of reliable data surrounding clients. From the existent data, one can plausibly hypothesize that there is a link between a man's relative position of power as compared to the dominant majority, and his likelihood to purchase sex. Men who perceive that they lack power within society might be more apt to purchase sex, potentially because in purchasing sex they are guaranteed a measure of power and control. However, more research is needed before this can be concluded.

One can also hypothesize that some men chose to purchase sex for the social standing that the purchase accords to them. As mentioned, this social standing can be potentially realized through the demonstration of agreement with a prevalent attitude towards women and sex, or through the demonstration of conspicuous consumption patterns, with prostituted women as the commodities in question. Understandably, the link between perceptions of power vis-à-vis the dominant majority and the propensity to purchase sex due to these motivations is less clear, and is potentially non-existent. Clients motivated by the status that purchasing sex provides them with are potentially not motivated by personal pleasure.

Unfortunately, very few parallels can be drawn between client demographics and self-professed motivations for purchasing sex. No studies match client motivations with client demographics. Therefore, one cannot know whether individuals from, say, upper income brackets have different motivations to purchase sex than do, say, merchant

marines at a port of call, or a general laborer. At this point in the research, one can only state that there are various motivations to purchase sex, that some demographic groups with less power vis-à-vis the dominant majority appear to be overly represented among clients, but that men from the dominant majority also purchase sex.

Further research into linking particular motivations to particular demographic groups would be beneficial in at least two ways. Firstly, it would allow client assistance and prevention programs to individualize their interactions with clients, and potentially reduce the number of “repeat” offenders by creating “tailor-made” messages to address motivations. Secondly, it would allow education programs to more effectively address younger men and boys, and hence reduce their propensity to purchase sex by addressing their own, potentially unique, motivations.

In light of the data surrounding the situation that affects prostituted women presented in the second chapter, reducing, and informing, the number of men who purchase sex is an important objective. More research in this area would result in allowing men to consider their own sexuality as a social construct. It would also allow men to question, and address, the socially constructed motivations they attest to when purchasing sex with greater precision. These are both important steps towards the end goal of men relinquishing the links between sexual pleasure and power, and between having sex, especially purchased sex, and the acquisition of status.

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